MONTEREY NEWS

JULY 1995

MEMORIAL DAY NIGHT, 1995

Just after seven o' clock on the evening of May 29, 1995, Memorial Day, a tornado that ripped through Egremont and Great Barrington continued east into Monterey. Three people were killed at Eagleton School on Route 23 near the Monterey town line when the car they were in was thrown through the air and crushed. The driver was found in the road, seriously injured but alive. He is Seung Choi, age twenty-eight, known as Sonny, who lives in Sheffield and teaches at Eagleton, a residential school for boys. Two of the victims, Christopher Bilodeau of Somerset, age fourteen, and Vinson Verble of Baltimore, Maryland, age 18, were students at Eagleton. The third person killed was Leslie Elson, age sixty-one, who lived and worked at the school. He had been an Eagleton employee for eighteen years.

In Monterey eight through roads (Main Road, Pixley Road, Corashire Road, River Road, Gould Road, Wellman Road, New Marlborough Road, and Sandisfield Road) were completely blocked by fallen trees, poles, and wires, hundreds of acres of woodlands were leveled, and many houses and vehicles were damaged or destroyed. Electricity and telephone service were cut for days. It is only by enormous good fortune that more people were not killed or injured by the tornado, or in the all-night effort to clear roads and search for survivors in its immediate aftermath. Many were terrified, and, as is typical of the sharply focused violence of a tornado, many others were oblivious. Good luck and bad were scattered at random across South Berkshire. What follows are first-hand accounts written by local residents, and stories written by Ann Higgins, MaryKate Jordan, and Peter Murkett, based on interviews.

Anita Carroll-Weldon

It began as any Monday night trip to the grocery store—a few sacks of food and a video for a long-needed evening of relaxation. As I left the store the deeply bruised sky threatened, the thunder clapped, the lightning cracked, the heavens opened. Ah, I thought, the first summer storm! (I love summer thunderstorms.) As I drove down Route 7, the rain was hard but not impassable, and as I turned onto Route 23 it began to clear up. One of those short storms, I thought.

But just after I passed Monument Valley Road, something strange began to happen. Things were dropping from the sky; not being blown, but falling straight down from nowhere. On closer look these "things" turned out to be pieces of buildings, chunks of clapboards and shingles. Suddenly, the atmosphere turned a ghostly gray-white-green color...and then it hit.

It was like trying to drive in a washing machine. I wanted to pull over, but there were trees everywhere. So the car inched along, becoming more and more difficult to keep on the road. As I approached the turn by Route 57, it was becoming impossible to see if there were any clear areas by the road where I might pull over. Then boom...my fate was decided. A huge pine crashed across the road in front of the car.

I put the car in PARK, shut the engine off and decided to climb onto the floor behind the driver's seat and lie there, covering my head with my arms.

Perhaps it was the pressure of the tornado, but there was an intense sensation of protection, like a bell jar placed over the car. Then silence. I heard nothing and felt the car move slightly to the side.

After a minute, maybe a few, I looked up. The windows had been blown out of the car. I got out and felt like I had landed on Mars. Nothing was recognizable—the landscape, the roofless houses. To add to the disorientation, what I did not realize was that my car had been totally turned around, facing in the opposite direction, on the other side of the road.

Then terror. Was anyone hurt in these houses? How far did this hit? Was my husband okay? Was my home damaged?

Thought I saw movement by the red house (a bed & breakfast). When I headed over there, the owner greeted me. "We're ruined," he said. He and his wife very kindly offered to let me stay, but I had to get word about my husband. Then someone showed up out on the road. He had climbed over the trees from Great Barrington. I headed down to find out what was happening. As we talked in the rain,

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another man appeared from out of the trees toward Monterey. His name was Jeff. His car had been crushed. We both decided we needed to find a way out, but first we went up to see if the folks were okay in the house that had the roof blown off. As we approached the house, young children appeared. The whole family had gone for safety in the cellar. The mother said she felt like a huge hand covered them in protection, but, she said, the sound was horrible, like a giant train coming at you.

Jeff and I decided to climb over the trees toward Great Barrington. It was still raining, with thunder and lightning. Tree on top of tree was down as far as you could see. The road itself was nowhere in sight. It was like a churning sea of trees. Many times I tried to touch the ground with my feet, but it was like trying to touch bottom in water thirty feet deep. It took nearly two hours to get to Eagleton School, about a quarter-mile down the road.

There police and firemen greeted us. An ambulance took us to Great Barrington, to a phone. I didn't reach home, on the other side of Monterey, until the next morning; it looked like nothing had happened.

What comes of all this? Grief for all those who lost their loved ones, for those who were injured, for those who lost their homes and businesses. A great thanks for all those who came to help piece things back together. And a shocking realization of how fragile our lives are here on earth.

We all must treasure every moment we are alive, for this hit very close to home.

Ann McGinley, Dan Andrus

Ann McGinley was driving into Great Barrington for a newspaper (something she virtually never does) when there was a downpour and strong wind threw debris around on Route 23 near Eagleton School. She pulled off the road by the playing field, and saw lightning strike two telephone poles; a transformer exploded. Her light pickup shuddered in the wind, she thought it would be rolled; trees were plucked from the ground by their roots, and a full trailer of canoes rocketed past and disappeared. Then it stopped. Wires draped from tilted and broken poles.

A man towing a boat pulled alongside, saying he thought it was over, and threaded his way through the mess. Ann followed, continued into town and bought

her paper as if nothing had happened. She started back toward Monterey, and found herself behind Monterey Assistant Fire Chief Dan Andrus, who was on his way to the firehouse, responding to a mutual aid call out of Great Barrington, storm damage.

Ann followed as Dan drove over wires and around trees, then stopped and got out when he came to a man hunkered down on his heels in the road, injured and bleeding, immobilized, but conscious. It was near the place where Ann had pulled off a short time before. She joined them. The man's name was Sonny, and he said the car he had been driving, with three others in it, had been thrown into the woods. Dan took his vital signs, which were okay, and he seemed stable. He told Ann (who has medical experience) to stay with Sonny.

The interconnected telephone system at Eagleton School depends on electricity, which was out, so the phones were also out (although phone cables on poles at that time were still functioning). Paul Carnese, another Monterey resident headed home, had pulled up, and Dan told him to drive back toward Great Barrington and phone for an ambulance. Then Dan began to search for the missing car with another Eagleton School staff member who had been in a second car behind the one that disappeared. As they climbed up on piles of horizontal trees and looked east, it appeared that the ground itself, with a few spikes of broken pines, was all that remained of Monterey. Dan went back to Sonny. Ann had wrapped him in a towel, which was all she had. No help had arrived. Sonny was soaking wet, but he remained stable. Ann kept talking to him, and prayed. His strength amazed her. Over and over he asked about "my kids," asked them to "find my kids."

Dan decided to search farther down Route 23. He reached Melvin Katsch's house, where all the windows were shattered, but Melvin seemed okay, and Dan continued east, eventually meeting Dave Ziegler (who lives on Rockwell Road) near the intersection of Routes 23 and 57. Together they checked houses to see if anyone was hurt, and spoke to a man and a woman who had been in cars. Everyone was okay. After about forty-five minutes Dan returned by himself to Eagleton, still no ambulance. Ann had helped Sonny lie down, and he was covered with a sleeping bag someone had brought from the school. By this time generators were running, so the school telephones worked; Dan called Great Barrington and Pittsfield dispatch, describing the situation and requesting an ambulance. Then Randy Leonard found the car, and came back to tell Dan that the three people still in it had been killed.

After still more time passed, they gave up waiting. Dan, Ann, and Chuck Loring, a fireman from New Marlborough who showed up from the Great Barrington side, used blankets and a found piece of plywood (which they broke to fit flat on the bed of Ann's small pickup) to improvise a stretcher, and loaded Sonny gently into the back of Ann's truck. They left for Fairview Hospital, Chuck attending Sonny in back.

The scene in Great Barrington was chaotic. Traffic was backed up to Belcher Square, so they drove into the oncoming lane with flashers on until they came to a roadblock manned by state police at the intersection of Main and Bridge Streets, where a trooper yelled at them to stop. Chuck leaped out to tell him what was up. The trooper immediately motioned for a cruiser to escort them to the hospital, but the driver didn't know where the hospital was, so he screeched back out of the way, and Ann continued.

Sonny was admitted to the emergency room, where the scene was noticeably unhurried, even nonchalant, a startling contrast. Ann told them an ambulance was urgently needed at Eagleton. (She had left just as Sonny's car was found, and didn't know whether there were other injured survivors.) She drove out past an idle ambulance, then came back a minute later, thinking she couldn't have been understood. She was told to go through proper channels, to a certain person elsewhere in the hospital, and she did.

Ann returned to Monterey through Stockbridge, and found Edith Wilson (whom she cares for) safe and well at home with a flashlight. Back home at last, with roads blocked, no lights and no phone, in the late night, Ann tried to sleep. There was nothing much else to do.

Meanwhile, an ambulance, police from Great Barrington, and more firemen and equipment finally arrived at Eagleton. They became focused on the victims in the wrecked car.

Dan resumed his search for others who might have been hurt or terrified, and set about opening Route 23 to the east with the help of Joe Wilkinson, Sr., who had arrived from the Great Barrington side with a backhoe/loader, and workers from the Great Barrington Highway Department, as well as volunteers with chainsaws. Past Melvin Katsch's house the road was not so densely blocked (there were fewer trees), and Dan divided the chainsaw work between two crews, one well ahead of the other for safety, which was crucial as they worked into the night cutting a narrow path through the massive, sprung, twisted trees—in the rain, in the dark, among fallen, tangled wires, with no good footing. Still, no one got hurt. Before dawn they met up with the crew working down from Monterey near the intersection of Routes 23 and 57.

Chief Ray Tryon and the Monterey Fire Company

Monterey Fire Chief Ray Tryon happened to be watching the storm from Nancy Kalodner's house high above the north shore of Lake Garfield when he saw a "wall cloud," from which a "tail" dropped down. He got his portable radio, and heard a voice he thought was Ed McCormick say there was a tornado on the south end of Main Street in Great Barrington. Then he heard Great Barrington Fire Chief Mike Fitzpatrick call Housatonic for mutual aid. When they asked, "What do you want?" Fitzpatrick replied, "Everything you've got." Ray then heard a call on the radio for mutual aid from Monterey and Egremont as well, but the Monterey tones did not go off, indicating that Berkshire County Dispatch in Pittsfield never received the message from Great Barrington. (The tower on Mt. Wilcox in Beartown State Forest which is the South County relay to

Pittsfield dispatch has no backup generator, and electricity to it had been cut by the tornado. A tower on Lenox Mountain can provide a weaker relay to Pittsfield.) Ray called Pittsfield himself, and the tones went off, calling all Monterey firemen to the firehouse.

As the firemen gathered, there was still no successful communication with Great Barrington. (The crush of radio traffic coming out of Great Barrington was so intense, and messages on the VHF bands that carry countywide emergency service communications are so much stronger from, and in, the Housatonic valley than those from the surrounding hills, that Monterey's efforts to be heard through the long night of the tornado were overwhelmed, and largely unheeded. All area emergency personnel and equipment were being called in to Great Barrington.) After a short while, the Monterey group left with every available chainsaw, as well as fuel, medical supplies, and the Company's emergency vehicle.

At the intersection of Blue Hill, Corashire, and Main Roads, they met Mike Mielke, Ellen Whitbeck, and Tish Thorpe, who said that Route 23 was blocked to the west. They continued, cutting the road clear of trees by the stone house with relative ease, and checking to see that people were okay, then traveling down about to the Vorck's driveway, where they were confronted with a mass of broken trees, wires, and poles, a virtual wall fifteen feet high. Ray climbed up on a large maple and looked west. In a flash of lightning, he saw what looked like a "hayfield that had just been mowed" as far as he could see. Others climbed up for a look, and some, when they saw what was ahead of them, just lay down in the road to breathe a moment. That they would find dead and seriously injured people now seemed certain. They were addressing a crisis on a scale no one of them had ever seen before.

During this time there were calls from Great Barrington for Monterey to respond with the Jaws of Life to an accident on Route 23 near Eagleton School. Despite repeated attempts to let Great Barrington know that it was completely impossible to get through, the message was not understood, or believed. In any case, no action was taken from the Great Barrington side that indicated they understood the enormity of the situation up here, or the immediate need for an ambulance near Eagleton (where, a few feet on the other side of the town line, the only fatalities of the storm occurred).

Leigh Tryon went back to Monterey for an excavator. Wendy Tryon, Gale Forbes, and Kathy Tryon opened up the General Store and gathered food and drinks. By this time (about nine o'clock), news of the tornado had spread through town, and had been broadcast on CNN. Volunteers with chainsaws, lights, trucks, backhoes, excavators, and other equipment were going to work everywhere. Jed Lipsky, Winston Wilson, Jim Thomas, Jeff Bynack, Roger Tryon, Wayne Burkhart, Wayne Dunlop, Pete Murkett, Richard Sheridan, Dave Markwood, Steve Snyder, the Kimberleys, the Amsteads, Dick Tryon, Henry Wolfer, Ronnie Leonard, Tony Carson, Steve Funk, members of the town highway department, Police Chief Gareth Backhaus—to name only a fraction of those out—were working to clear every road in town.

The next day it appeared as if we had moved without actually going anywhere.

— Glynis Oliver

Wayne Perry (known as Joe), from Otis, and Russell Burke of Becket are both professionals in the tree and logging business. Russell had heard the radio traffic on a scanner, and after speaking to Joe on the phone, they headed through Monterey. Until this time, experienced but non-professional fire company members were working with the chainsaws, but it was Joe and Russell who ended up on either side of Leigh Tryon, operating his excavator, to cut a channel through the wall on Route 23. Joe's partner Milt Paine backed him up, and Russell's son Joe worked close behind his father; they kept the saws sharp and fueled while the two men buzzed through trunks and twisted, sprung branches without pause for hours on end; Leigh set the logs aside, and the excavator crawled ahead. Fire company members held lights and threw smaller stuff off to the side; they cut through power lines and phone cables using rescue saws with special steel-cutting blades.

The sense of urgency was intense; everyone expected the worst, thinking of what they would find buried in the wreckage. Joe Perry worked at such a demonic pace that Mike Marcus couldn't get him to stop even long enough to take a drink. Yet no one got hurt. The men worked five hours to get through the four-tenths of a mile to the intersection of Routes 23 and 57. (Next day, as electric company crews poured in to restore power, they asked Ray what kind of equipment and manpower had cleared the path so quickly. They couldn't believe the answer.)

Meanwhile, other fire company members, in close radio contact with Chief Tryon, made their way to every house on foot, searching for anyone hurt, checking on damage to vehicles and buildings. It was a dreadful job: no one at the time was prepared to believe what later turned out to be true, that in such complete devastation they would find not even one serious injury. Tyringham's fire company had been called, and was standing by at the Monterey firehouse. But what to do if and when the need for an ambulance arose seemed to be a choice among bad alternatives: the Blue Hill detour was known to be open, but radio contact with Great Barrington had proved totally frustrating and ineffective; all emergency personnel and equipment in the area were being drawn to Great Barrington, and the nearby ambulances on the perimeter were in Becket or Sandisfield. (Although it was not known in Monterey at the time, Becket and Sandisfield ambulance crews were standing by in their stations.) Darkness and the lack of power and lights made the prospect of a helicopter landing risky, and it would take time to coordinate in any case.

The sense of being cut off increased through the night, and with it the tension involved in slowly and thoroughly probing the devastation. The Monterey emergency response team stuck together, worked fast and hard, and was graced in

the end with unimaginable good luck.

It was about three in the morning when Mike Marcus, along with Lanny Lanoue and Jim Halleck, left the road at the intersection of 23 and 57 to climb and crawl down toward the Dempsey house. It was nearly impossible to pick out the driveway at the road beneath the fallen trees. Mike was lugging a heavy first aid box, so Lanny and Jim got to the house first, and called out to Mike that everyone was okay. They circled out again through the field near the Hayloft Gallery, and Mike headed straight toward the lights and saws then working down Route 57. Pulling himself through the maze, there was a moment when he lay on his back looking up at a calm night sky riddled with stars—quiet, peaceful, and very beautiful.

John and Maureen Congdon

John and Maureen Congdon own and operate Mountain Trails Bed and Breakfast, located at the intersection of Routes 23 and 57 in Monterey. Monday evening for them was the time between guests, one crew recently gone, the next due to arrive Tuesday.

After cleaning the rooms, they drove down to Price Chopper for groceries and supplies. Coming out of the store, Maureen commented on the suffocating humidity. When they got back home, she turned on the radio while putting things away, and heard a warning for thunderstorms with high winds. Indeed, the sky was threatening and the dogs were getting skittish. She called to John, who was up the hill setting out some tomato plants, then called again a few moments later, sharply, Now! (Quite out of character, they agreed, in retrospect.) As John came down the hill to the house there was a little thunder and rain, and the sky was a "very intense brown." Within the minute it took John to remove his shoes and walk toward the bedroom, the tornado hit with a deafening roar, a sound so full and large that it was impossible to distinguish its separate elements: breaking glass, wind, a large white pine crashing onto the roof of the main house and a cherry tree onto the roof of the dining room ell, limbs and

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John Congdon

litter smashing against the outside walls. Maureen was pulled to a central hallway by their dogs (still leashed after their walk). She lay on top of them and prayed for the chaos to stop, for forgiveness, for it to stop, stop!

In less than a minute it was over, and the only sound was rain. They didn't know what had hit them. Maureen was afraid it would start again.

John ventured down to the road. Someone came up from the Dempsey house below Hayloft Gallery and they called to each other. By the vehicles in his driveway, they decided Leonard Weber was not home. Route 23 to the west was packed "thirty feet high" with trees. Uprooted whole trees had skidded and tumbled along the blacktop. John went back to Maureen, still at the house, still fearful that whatever had come would return. Anita Carroll-Weldon, who had been in her car, appeared at the house soaking wet. They invited her to stay, but she only wanted to reach home. Water dripped everywhere from the ceiling.

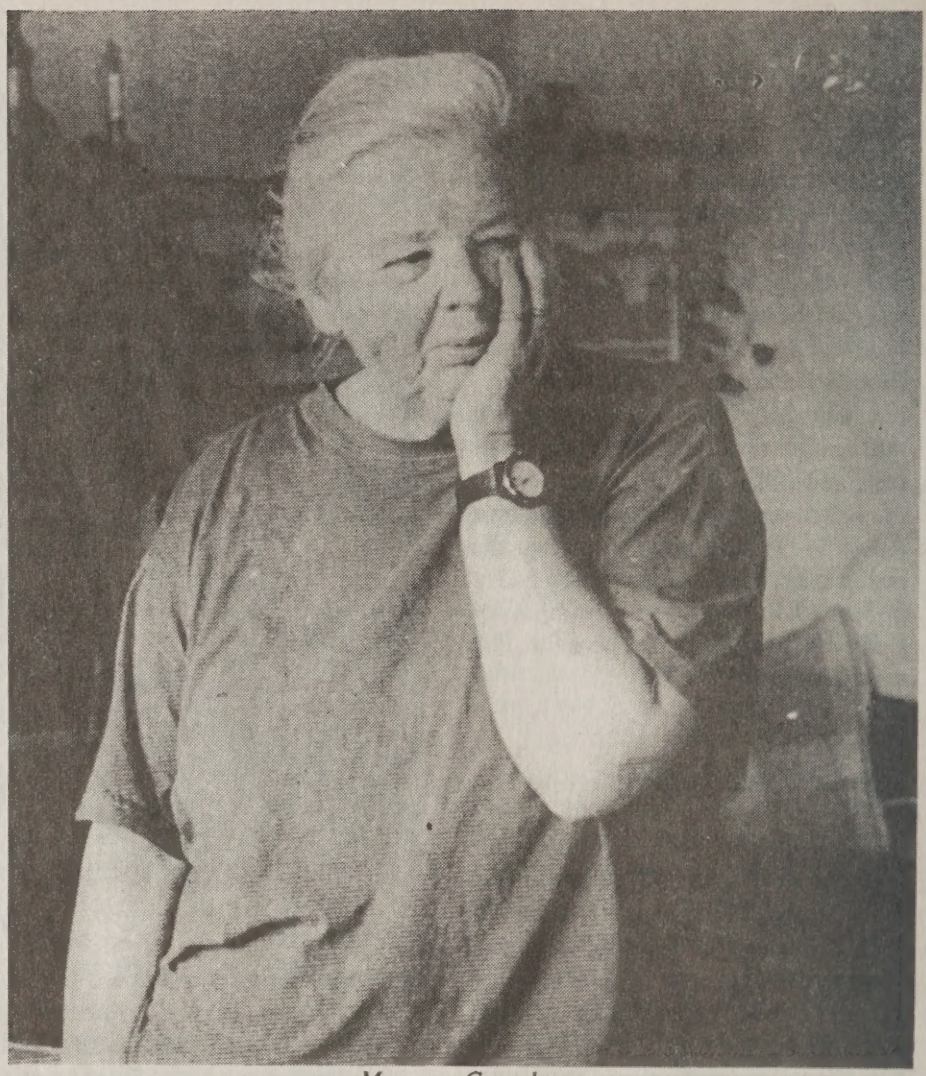
Eventually, they learned over the radio that a tornado had hit the Barrington Fairgrounds, but nothing was said about Monterey. They saw lights and activity around Eagleton School. Rescue workers from the Great Barrington side came to see if they were okay.

Three weeks later the Congdons were still numb, running through quick episodes of anger, sadness, fear, gratitude, resignation, and resolve, one after the other. "Number one," said Maureen, describing the emotional effects of the storm, was "humbling." In a matter of seconds, and without warning, the Congdons' business and income was wiped out, and their home and its setting were ravaged. A barn was demolished, the house roof shattered, the foundation and chimney cracked.

A state building inspector condemned the house, slapping an orange sticker on it before he disappeared somewhere back east. Marty Clark took charge of the dogs, and a state trooper drove John and Maureen into some disaster relief center. Maureen's nephew, who lives in Barrington, told her he'd heard on the radio that their house was to be razed. Before he left, the building in-

spector had said that the trees had to be removed from the house before he would allow even temporary occupancy again. Scott Mackenzie took the trees off that same day, and John made his way to the center of Monterey, where, with the help of Town Secretary Maryellen Brown, he contacted a building inspector in Pittsfield, who came down and authorized rehabitation for two people only (plus dogs), downstairs only. John asked him to take the sticker off the house, and he replied, "Let the SOB who put it on take it off."

Over the weeks, volunteers helped, and helped some more. The Congdons praised a crew of nine boys and their supervisor from Berkshire Farm in Canaan, New York; Scott Mackenzie; Tom Gillis, who finally found a tarp in Springfield and covered their roof; the Red Cross, who made sure they ate the sandwiches and fruit provided; the Great Barrington Fire Department; Richard Sheridan; Construct; The Baptist disaster relief volunteers from North Carolina; and their own small community of near neighbors who helped each other out every way they could.



Maureen Congdon

MaryKate Jordan

"You can't get through here," the man standing in the middle of Route 23 said as he flagged my car to a stop. "There's been a tornado."

"But I'm only a mile and a half from home," I replied. It seemed a little enough thing.

"Everything up there's been flattened," he said.

Somehow I turned my car around, aware of the pounding of my heart. OK, God. Bonnie's at work, not home, so she's safe. The house is standing or it isn't. The animals are safe, or they aren't. Now what do I do? Where do I go?

Just ahead, lights at The Turning Point shone like a beacon. My hands shook so hard I had trouble opening the car door after I parked, which gave Jamie Yost time to open the door to the Inn as I started up the walk.

"Have you heard from your father?" I asked. He's my next-door neighbor.

Jamie hook her head "He's not home," she said. I felt relieved. "He and Anna were driving south through Great Barrington on Route 7. They left the house a little before seven."

Relief drained away and for an instant I was speechless.

"Is Bonnie at work?" she asked. I nodded.

"There are other people here who can't get home," Jamie continued. Those of us who knew each other hugged the fierce hello of acquaintances from home unexpectedly thrown together in a foreign country.

"My phone's working," Jamie said. I called Bonnie, then settled in, like everyone else, to that uncomfortable, necessary space called "I don't know."

Jamie brought in a radio. WSBS was still on the air. We listened to the radio and spent the next few hours doing homey things for each other. We talked quietly, shared tea. The kids ate cheese and crackers. Occasionally the phone rang and we'd all hush to hear.

Jamie's father called. "Anna and I are safe with friends," he said. They'd passed the fairgrounds and shopping plaza on Route 7 three minutes before the tornado struck. Soon after the call, some folks left the Inn, determined to find a way home. Others went up to bed.

Just before midnight, the radio announcer confirmed the deaths of two students and a staff member in a car outside Eagleton School. By 12:30 I saw Bonnie's car in the eerie red glow of the flares at the police barricade, now set up outside the Inn's Route 23 windows.

Each time I drifted off to sleep that night, my mind would start to nag, taunting me. The house is gone, the house is gone, I'd hear inside my head. By the

grace of God the house is safe, I'd respond to myself. Until I hear otherwise, the house is safe.

By six, Bonnie and I went outside and discovered that a single track had been cleared along Route 23. We jumped into her car and drove into the strange, grey morning. It looks pretty normal, I thought. But why is it so light ahead?

As the road curved, we entered a narrow tunnel barely wide enough for the car to get through, lined with pieces of trees and debris like a leather glove lined with fur. The familiar canopy had vanished. More precisely, it lay at our feet, piled high in pieces on both sides of the car.

Dear God... The rest of my prayer went unvocalized. Eagleton School was still standing, but the damage along the road was impossible to take in. Where did all those houses across the street come from? my mind asked. Oh, those are part of Eagleton; these three were the pretty houses you could hardly see in that cul-de-sac with all the trees... oh, that's Melvin's... the trees... the trees... that's why it's so light up here... It looks like that National Geographic photo of the trees blown down around Mount Saint Helens.

As we crept slowly along, I searched for the occasional comforting landmark in the long swath of devastation. Lenny Weber's studio was still be standing... But I didn't focus on it too clearly. My eyes were riveted on an unfamiliar silver gleam downhill to my right.

"Bonnie," I whispered. "I can see Lake Buel from here."

We parked in the meadow where Stevens Lake Road turns right off Route 23, and struck off through the woods. We climbed over, under and around fallen trees, happy to find so many trees still standing. The scent from broken pines filled the air with a sweet fragrance almost as disorienting as the altered landmarks had been a quarter mile back.

"Irving's house is standing," Bonnie called as I jumped down from a fallen oak. Then we could see our place. Garage standing. House okay from this side. Toby's barking—but not frantic. We ran the last hundred yards, through a yard that looked the same as when we'd left it.

Inside, we hugged the dog and all four cats, explored and found the house was intact. By the time we heard the helicopters buzzing overhead, Bonnie was eating breakfast and I was drinking tea on the deck overlooking the lake. Four of our trees were down, expanding our view, but the view itself had changed.

Now there were four hills, not two-and-a-fraction, at the end of the lake, hills that had been hiding behind acre upon acre of now-uprooted trees. The tree devastation reminded me of another tornado, in October, 1979.

That one had touched down in Feeding Hills, near Westfield, just as school let out. My friend Lilian and I came back from lunch to find that a tornado had skipped down her street, but left her house intact, as mine was after this tornado. And where was I during the Monterey tornado? Out to dinner. With Lily, of course.

Melissa Warner

I was returning from my son's baseball game. He and his sister were wowing from the back seat as I maneuvered the car betwixt thick scattered wires and large splintered branches. It wasn't dark yet, but I recall knowing, as vividly as witnessing, swirling, sparking confusion in a removed terror of direct-hit crunchings. We were coming upon Eagleton minutes after the winds. Another car inched toward me through the greenery in the road. "There's a serious accident in there," the driver quaked. "Do you have a car phone?" I don't. Backing out, avoiding the wires, my bumper hung up on the steel railing twisted along the road.

Several hours later, on the east fringe of the Eagleton/57 wreckage, there were no phones availing. I'd detoured by way of Brett Road to my house across from Stevens Lake. The EMTs suggested that perhaps my other three homebound children were now at the Mielkes', my neighbors. Rick had been spotted wandering the woods, probably seeking a path to his home through jungles and pitfalls of uprooted trees littering his property. Trying to guide my two children, who were with me in the dark, with no window lights about, I lost the way. We covered a usual five-minute walking distance in half to three-quarters of an hour. I turned our hopes over to the sounds of numerous chainsaws amidst chaotic shadowed lighting near the intersection on 23.

Finally there, I broke down. At 12:30 a.m. in the Berkshire Tornado aftermath, at a line of frantic, single-tasked men, I cried idiotically: "I don't know where my children are, and nobody seems to care!" One like-soul turned briefly from his saw to me and stated forcefully, "There are cars and bodies buried in here."

Back in my car, again detouring, I found my three children in their father's care. They had all sat in his car at the Lake Buel boat ramp, watching the boats and having a picnic through it all!

CONDOS TO CASTLES

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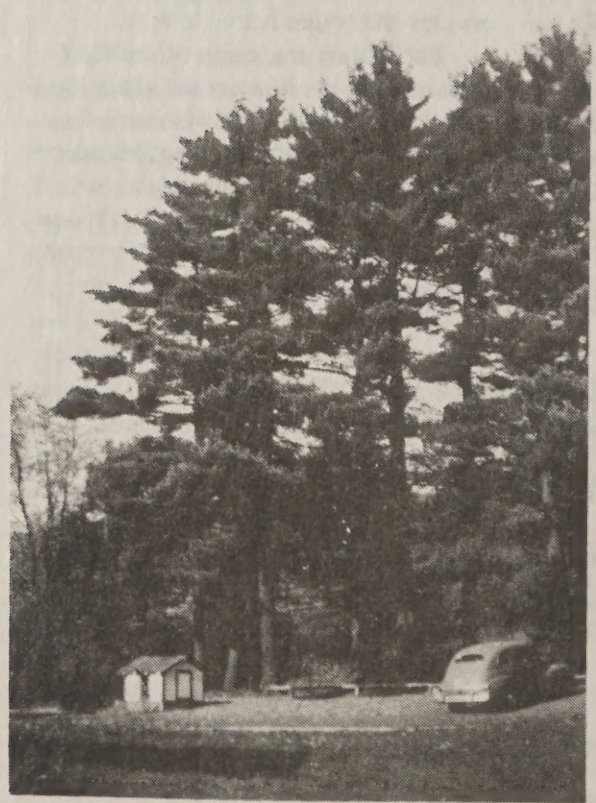

Left (courtesy of Helen Heller), a view of the tall white pines along Route 23 from the Heller house in the 1940s. Above, looking toward the house today. They were magnificent trees fifty years ago, and a hundred years old when they were blown down. Below, Steve, Lilie, Helen, and Nick Heller enjoy good weather as they take a break from cleaning up.

P. MURRETT

Amanda Thieriot

I was sitting on the couch bored when I decided to turn on the TV and the news flashed on saying that a severe tornado warning was in effect for the Berkshires. The weatherman said that if you had a basement to go and hide there until it was safe. So I turned off the TV and I took my dog and I went downstairs, and maybe five minutes later the lights went off, and then I was really scared because after about twenty minutes my basement door was gone—I saw it with my ears! I thought I was going to die. I just wanted to close my ears and be someplace else.

Tim came and got me an hour later. I asked him if everyone was okay. He said yes, so I went upstairs and was surprised at the damage. After that I lay down and went to sleep.

THE END.

P.S. I cut it short!

COLTA IVES

Gary and Colta Ives' car cradles a thirty-five-foot ash tree at their home on New Marlborough Road.

Lew Scheffey

Lew and Joyce Scheffey live in an eighteenth-century house on Wellman Road. Lew has a studio on the second floor of a small outbuilding a hundred feet or so southeast of the house. That's where he was on Monday evening when he decided to make a dash for the house through a thunderstorm downpour. Turns out Lew and the tornado were running straight at each other, and they met at the house, more or less. Relatively high atmospheric pressure trapped in the house combined with the extreme low pressure of the tornado made it nearly impossible to push open the door. The moment Lew forced the door in, he and Joyce (who was inside) heard a loud cracking from the roof, the whole house shook, and a pair of French doors were blown open, letting in a wind that rolled up a rug and knocked a few things off a shelf before it slammed the doors shut again seconds later. Before they could make a move, it was over.

They thought, or said, Well, that wasn't so bad. But when they went outside to see what had happened, they found trees and wires down everywhere along Wellman Road. The entire house roof had been lifted from the plate beams enough to crack the trim along both eaves; part of it had blown off entirely, and lay in pieces on fields east of the house. The roof came apart where boards were all butted and nailed on the same rafter—an example of two-hundred-year-old poor construction (except, how poor can construction be that lasts two hundred years?) that left a weakness which acted as a hinge and evidently saved the bulk of the roof.

The tornado had also thrown the roof off a small woodshed into the wall of windows on the second floor of the studio, where Lew had been when he decided to run through the rain to the house. The studio was littered with broken glass.

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Glynis Oliver

We were upstairs in our house. I had not had the radio on all day since the morning forecast mentioned late-day thunderstorms. That was all I was thinking as the sky got darker and the power blinked off my CD player. I went to the bedroom window and saw the branches of two spruce trees in front of the house waving violently. I commented to Will that I had never seen it blow so hard, and then we were running out of the room fast as we saw the tall pine behind the house start to fall. It was the one I had always worried about hitting the house. A great gust of wind followed us out of the bedroom and slammed the door shut behind us. We later discovered that the wood storm doors to the deck adjoining this room had been ripped off and the inner doors blown in, twisting the hardware with which they were bolted to the floor. The storm door was speared in mid-air by the falling pine.

As I hunkered in the stairwell a few seconds I was aware of noises, a loud bang and cracks, and the house felt unstable, but we really didn't know where to put ourselves. By the time we reached the kitchen it was over. We did not hear the noise described as a freight train, although our nearest neighbor clearly heard it.

I first looked out the front window and called in disbelief to Will that the two spruce trees were down. He, at another window, informed me that the garage was gone. It was the garage which he'd just finished roofing a few days before. I had to laugh. We had been planning to clean it out the very next day of years of accumulated junk, and now it had been done for us. The two other small buildings we lost were crushed by falling trees, but the garage itself was lifted up and thrown in pieces all over our front yard, the road, and down into the

river. Our truck, parked in front of the garage, survived with one small dent, a missing antenna, and a broken side light. A smaller garage was covered to invisibility by fallen trees, and the car inside was later extricated intact, with three minor dents.

As we valiantly tried to grasp this new reality that had been thrust upon us, we had much more immediate concerns. Appearing out of nowhere, a woman called to us that she and another woman and four children were in a car that had been travelling down our road. The car had been stopped by one of our falling spruces in front and another tree behind. Francine Groener and Michele Brooks miraculously happened into the only open spot within the tornado zone. Soon we were all in the kitchen getting acquainted and wondering what to do next. I eventually found some candles and saw by their light that part of the kitchen ceiling had come down, scattering sawdust and carpenter ants all over my kitchen counter and floor. It was a fun time.

MAGGIE LEONARD

Glynis' and Will's garage, cleaned out.

Our main concerns that evening were to keep calm and maintain if possible a semblance of normalcy so as not to unduly upset the children. Will climbed three times over all the downed trees to our south, hoping to get word out to Francine's husband. Each time we saw lights from vehicles, he would set out for the arduous climb with the flashlight. The third time through he was successful, meeting up with a teenager from Hartsville [Cory Jassen] whose phone was still working.

Back home we were settling in, possibly for the night. The children had dozed off in sleeping bags, and I was getting out my spare bedding when one of us spotted a flashlight bobbing in the road right outside. It was John Groener come to rescue his family. He had climbed over and through countless trees covering the road to our south. The message he got was "first house after the downed trees," but it must have seemed endless. Everyone was woken up, and it was decided they would try to get home. Will and I went with them back over all the trees to provide additional light, and Will by now knew the best route, although it was not an easy trip. Nine people single file helping each other over enormous tree trunks. It was quite a night and not over yet.

After "our" family had reached the safety of their Jeep and gratefully headed home, we turned to do the same, but were astonished to see a truck towing a boat pull up, just someone trying to get home to Otis after the holiday weekend. Unable to proceed or turn on our narrow road, he backed out with the help of our lights to guide him. When we were finally headed home over all the trees, I felt a sense of exhilaration at having survived.

Life has changed for us. From dawn the next day, when I stood on my deck and saw helicopters overhead, saw our new landscape for the first time, saw Michele's car still in the road between the trees, saw that every tall tree in sight was down in every direction, but none had hit the house, I knew we had been very lucky, and I felt blessed to be there.

So many people have helped with the very hard work of clearing the trees and branches that we now truly know we are part of a large community of caring people. Together we have sawed and rolled great logs, and stacked and chipped small mountains of branches. We have even managed to upright some smaller saplings that were pinned to the ground but alive, and rejoiced at their having put forth new leaves even while flat on the ground. Life goes on. Nature's awesome force that plowed across the landscape also rejuvenates and renews without a moment's pause. In this spirit of renewal we invited the community of Monterey to our place to add the human voice in song to Nature's work of regrowth and healing.

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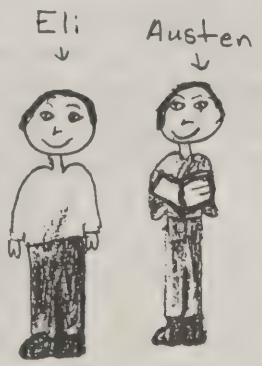
The Groeners and the Brookses

Route 23 was quiet as Michele Brooks and Francine Groener cruised through the center of Monterey at suppertime, near home at last after a holiday weekend trip to Salem with their children. Thickening clouds had persuaded most people to go indoors. As they passed Roadside Store and took a left down River Road, Michele glanced at the dashboard clock, which read 7:13—the exact time when the first of her twin daughters Brandy and Ashley was born, on this day nine years ago. "Isn't it a little early to be this dark?" Francine asked, flicking on her high beams. The world grew strange outside the car. Branches and bits of debris caught by the wind rolled down the road like tumbleweed, in opposite directions, as if driven by a whirlwind. Francine slowed the car as they came to a house on the left, and looked up. Slowly, silently, tumbling toward them was a tree, torn up by the wind and flung down at the road. It landed in front of the car. Francine braked, then threw the gears into reverse—to no avail, as a utility pole fell across the road behind them. More trees came down the hillside, still in silence; then thunder, lightning, and torrential rain followed.



When everything came to rest again, Michele happened to look at the clock: it was 7:23, the exact time that her second twin was born. They all took a minute to thank God they were alive!

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Brandy Brooks

Brandy turned nine years old on May 29 this year, the day of the tornado. She wrote and illustrated the following story, dedicated to Francine Groener, in her third grade class at Undermountain Elementary School.

The Tornado

Once upon a time there lived a girl. Her name was Brandy and Brandy had a sister named Ashley. Their Mom had a friend named Francine, she had two boys named Eli and Austen. All of them were going to Salem on Friday. They could not wait to go. On Friday they packed the car, it took them half an hour. Two hours later they got to Salem.

Brandy said, "Can we go to the witches dungeon?"

"Maybe later," said Brandy's mom.

"Ok," said Brandy.

On Monday they went home but they took a short cut. Francine had just finished saying they had a very nice time in Salem. On the way home it turned pitch dark and it was raining so hard that Francine could not see the road. Brandy's mom said, "Watch out there are trees coming down in front of us." Her mom thought Francine was going to zoom right through them but her mom said "No." So Francine was going to go backwards but trees were coming down in back of us. They were all scared they thought they were going to die. Francine had her high heels on. "Thank God," said Eli, "there's a house over there." Francine ran out of the car and went into the house. There were people there. The people let them stay for the night. The people that owned the house were named Glynis.

"They are very kind," said mom to Francine.

After a while, they heard a big noise, it came from the roof. All of a sudden the roof cracked! BOOM!!!! There was an L shaped crack in the ceiling and bugs were coming down. Then the garage blew away and the shed did too! Almost everything blew away except the bird house. At 10:30 at night I was tired and so was Austen so we had to sleep together in a bed because there were only two sleeping bags and Ashley and Eli got to have them. Austen and I slept for about one hour we woke up. Eli said, "I know my dad will come because he always rescues us if we are trapped." Two hours later John came with a flash light. John stayed for about ten minutes. "Well," said John, "we should get a move on." Will and Glynis came too. It took about half an hour to hike through the trees. Finally we got to the Jeep and we drove home. When we got home the lights were out. When John dropped us off dad got home. My mom wanted to go to her moms so we did. We stayed there for twenty minutes.

The next day we went to the store and we saw Francine and the boys. francine was crying because she was happy that we were all alive. Ashley wanted the boys to come to our house but they could not come.

The End.

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Linda Gero

Linda Gero, who lives on Route 23 near Blue Hill Road, hasn't liked even ordinary thunderstorms since the 1973 West Stockbridge tornado touched down just half a mile from where she then lived in Richmond. In fact, she uses the space at the top of her basement stairs as her "storm perch," and often rides out thunderstorms there with her daughter, Kim.

Kim spent Memorial Day with her father, Rudy, so when the weather grew threatening at dinnertime, Linda switched on her kitchen radio and curled up in her storm perch with a bowl of cereal and Omie. (Her canine weather indicator dislikes storms even more than she does.) Linda was reassured to hear that WSBS would stay on the air with storm warnings. Suddenly the lights dimmed and went out. In the silence she heard a hauntingly familiar change in the sound of the wind.

"Omie, come," she said as she dashed down the basement stairs. Linda had just put one foot on the basement floor when leaves, twigs, and debris started flying in a tiny window high in the south basement wall. She dropped to the floor and covered her head. She could still hear the horrible scream of the wind, the shattering glass and wood, and the dull thud of trees landing where they were thrown. It was all over, stunningly quiet, in what she felt was about thirty seconds.

Gingerly, Linda crept toward Omie who was still guarding the storm perch. Halfway upstairs, she could smell the strong scent of pine. Her living room furniture lay scattered under and around several pine trees which had crashed through the roof and the new bay window, installed just a week before. The room was strewn with shattered glass, and Linda could smell wet plaster even before she got to her bedroom. Another tree had shattered the roof in there.

"OK, Omie, let's go see about Kim," she remembered thinking in a daze as she picked up her car keys. Outside, reality settled in a little at a time. Her car was under the middles of those trees whose top halves were in her living room, so she went back for the keys to her old winter car. Then she took a look at Route 23, heaped with trees in both directions. She left Omie in the old car with a window cracked open and set off for Rudy's on foot. A little way up the road, she saw her neighbor Jack Ryder climbing over trees on his way to check on the folks in the stone house. "I'll put up a tarp for you after I've checked on Sylvie," he said. Linda has had surgery and is not supposed to do demanding physical tasks, so she was especially grateful for Jack's offer of help. Then she looked up and saw a wonderful sight: Kim and Rudy and Kim's friend Dierdre Higgins.

Linda has been challenged a lot in the last few years: her marriage ended; she faced and moved through a health crisis; now her house and car and lawn were all covered with trees, parts of trees, mangled lawn furniture, parts of a shed, and plain old unidentifiable stuff. But as she walked around to assess what damage she could see in the remaining light, and as she cried, Linda says she also knew that she would be all right.

Maureen Congdon was ankle deep in glass in an upstairs bedroom, clearing it out, starting on a task she had set for herself—just to do something, anything—***when a tailored "Connie Chung wannabe" appeared in the room, saying, "Is this how you do it?" Maureen asked her to leave.***

"Like my pot of pansies," she said. A pot of pansies sitting on her back deck railing before the tornado was still—well, sitting on her back deck railing. Ragged in spots, but alive, with roots still firmly in the earth.

Special gifts of help sum up the best of the aftermath for Linda. That night she had tarps and nails ready, but couldn't find a hammer. Her neighbor, Jack, brought one over right away. Rudy got up on the roof, and soon the house was as snug as a tornado-struck house in the rain can be. But that first night, Linda and Omie stayed with Kim at Rudy's house, after leaving food for the cats—all three safe and accounted for.

Linda's sister Wendy and Wendy's husband Wayne found Linda and Kim at Rudy's about one o'clock Tuesday morning. They came back to help often during the next weeks. Kim helped every day with brush removal and cleanup chores. Rudy took days off from work, clearing trees with his chain saw. The days after the tornado, Linda said, deepened the friendship they'd established after their divorce. Linda's friend Ed arrived on Tuesday and started patching the roof. Linda's parents, Ron and Phyllis Smith, arrived on Wednesday to fill out the core crew of helpers.

Ray Tryon, Mike Mielke, Peter Brown, and Ellen Whitbeck were all helpful. Some folks from the Monterey church lent a hand, and Keith Snow brought a check donated by his former parish in Virginia. Linda was amazed. "Those people don't know me at all," she said. Then help began to come from other people Linda didn't know. A group of men from The Church on the Hill in Lenox, headed by Quentin Chin, spent a day clearing her property, as did seniors from Mount Everett during their Give-Back Day. The seniors brought their own lunches, but Linda made a chocolate cake to say thank you.

Despite her discomfort with storms, Linda seems to have a talent for finding silver linings in cloudy skies. "Every time there is a setback in my life," she says, "I am nevertheless enriched with the experience of crossing paths with truly wonderful people."

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A COSTLY WIND

The tornado that blew through Monterey on Memorial Day didn't only take lives, roofs, and trees with it, but also managed to suck approximately $130,000 out of the Town coffers to date (June 16). Almost all of the money spent so far has gone for manpower and machinery (excavators, log trucks, etc.) used to clear away the trees, debris, and brush that filled the roads in the wake of the storm. Recently, Massachusetts State Highway Department crews and machinery have been working on the clean up at no charge.

P. MURKETT

Town Secretary Maryellen Brown at work on the phone in the communications center set up by the Federal Emergency Management Agency after the tornado in the fire company pavilion. FEMA technician Herb Townsend is in the background. The phones were made available to residents for free long distance calls while regular phone service was down. This was the first time the facility was used for anything other than communication between emergency management officials.

At a meeting of Town board members and officeholders held June 13, Dean Amidon requested that the Select Board contact State Senator Jane Swift, State Representative Chris Hodgkins, and Congressman John Olver, as well as Senators Kennedy and Kerry, to request that Monterey be reimbursed for the tornado expenses quickly. The Select Board had heard that the state legislature would need to appropriate additional funds for the disaster relief and that any reimbursement from MEMA (Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency) would come in November at the earliest. Select Board member Georgiana O'Connell stated that it would be very hard on the Town to wait that long for state aid, pointing out that the total appropriation for the Town budget is $1,589,459, our portion of the School budget is $746,954, leaving approximately $712,000 to run the Town for the year; so tornado costs represent quite a chunk of the budget. Select Board member Peter Brown suggested that concerned citizens write the various representatives to encourage them to expedite the reimbursement process—that is, *send money now!* To help you help them act, here are addresses:

State Rep. Christopher Hodgkins
4th Berkshire District
45 Railroad St.
Lee, MA 01238

State Senator Jane Swift
8 Bank Row
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Congressman John W. Olver
Federal Building
78 Center St.
Pittsfield, MA 01201

U.S. Senator John F. Kerry
145 State St., Suite 504
Springfield, MA

U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy
2400 John F. Kennedy Federal Bldg.
Boston, MA

Select Board member Stefan Grotz praised the attention and efforts of John Briggs, the Western Massachusetts Director for the Office of the Governor. Smiling, Grotz recounted that he described Monterey to Briggs as an "inteliigent and feisty town that needs help but doesn't like to get pushed around." Grotz indicated that Briggs understood our "town personality," and both he and Peter Brown said Briggs was "invaluable" in getting information to Governor Weld. This came in handy, particularly with getting permission from the state Department of Environmental Protection to burn the huge brush pile generated by the storm. Initially the DEP did not want to grant permission; then, according to Peter Brown, during one of many phone calls, they "very suddenly" okayed the request. A nudge from the Gov, perhaps?

On the brighter side of tornado finances, NYNEX representative Cheryl Robert, who was in charge of coordinating crews to restore phone service in Monterey, initiated a collection among line crews and engineers in the NYNEX garages each morning. On June 22, Ms. Robert and representatives from the line crews and engineers met with Select Board members and Fire Chief Tryon to present the Town with an $800 check.

Also, several organizations have initiated disaster relief funds that can help approximately fifty-five Monterey households affected by the storm. Construct of Great Barrington is administering funds from the National Council of Churches which will be distributed among the three towns hit by the storm (Monterey, Great Barrington, and South Egremont). Dale Duryea (Wildlife Control Officer) has organized a Bowling Tournament to be held at the Cove Bowling Lanes on July 15 and 16 to benefit tornado victims in the three towns, and there was a benefit dance at Bogies on South Main St. in Great Barrington on June 2 called Torn-Aid-O, all proceeds for folks affected by the tornado.

[cont'd next page]

Some grassroots efforts are dedicated exclusively to Monterey, such as the Monterey Tornado Relief Fund (c/o Select Board, Town Hall, Monterey MA 10245). Virgil Stucker of the Berkshire Taconic Foundation helped the Select Board set it up, and all donations are tax deductible. The Select Board will review requests and make recommendations for dispersal of funds collected. For information about this fund, cal Marjorie Jaffe in New York at 516-484-2161, or Greta Cherneff at 413-528-2949.

The Monterey Fire Company has initiated a fund dedicated to planting trees along public ways to help restore some grace and shade to our blasted landscape. They, too, invite fully tax-deductible donations, which may be sent to the Monterey Fire Company, P. O. Box 99, Monterey, MA 01245. Call Medical Officer Michael Marcus at 413-528-4115 for more detailed information.

— Maggie Leonard

P. MURKETT

CLEANING UP

In the days and weeks following the tornado, there was a lot to organize. We had never needed an Incident Commander before. Ray Tryon assumed that role, directing and coordinating the volunteers, various agency personnel, and equipment swarming out of the woodwork. Michael Marcus spent most of his time at the firehouse manning the radio, computer, and telephone. Paul Bynack, also a member of the Fire Company, gradually became a sort of field coordinator.

The first day after the blow, a thorough search of the town was carried out by units of the state police and National Guard military police, each team accompanied by someone familiar with Monterey people and places, mostly Monterey firemen and police. After the searchers checked each house, they attached a yellow police ribbon in a conspicuous spot, marking their progress. Both federal and state emergency management teams were on hand, the (fraternal) twins FEMA and MEMA. MEMA worked with Governor Weld to arrange for two state agencies, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Highway Department, to provide about twenty-five men and equipment, including dump trucks, front end loaders, chippers, cherry pickers, and tree trucks to help remove trees from private property. This work continues at press time.

About sixty Monterey properties were damaged, and Paul Bynack was the one making arrangements with owners to prepare for the arrival of cleanup crews. Monterey Highway Department crews, Select Board members, police, and firemen were all busy. There were volunteers from Mount Everett High School, Berkshire Farm in Canaan, New York, Construct of Great Barrington, firemen from Tolland, Richmond, and Sandisfield, a volunteer group of NYNEX workers called the Pioneers, the Red Cross, a group of Southern Baptists from North Carolina, and a group of Mennonites from Pennsylvania, St. James Episcopal Church and the Lutheran Church in Great Barrington. It is impossible to name every individual who helped out doing what needed to be done in the days and weeks after the storm, but the list includes Russell and Joe Burke, Dick Busch, Tony Carson, Peter Chait, Rich Crittendon, Bill Dyer, Steve Funk, Andy Ketchen, the Kimberleys, Ken LaVigne, Ron and Randy Leonard, Jed Lipsky, Scott Mackenzie, Mike Mielke (the world's calmest, most knowledgeable, gracious, and unyielding roadblock monitor) Wayne Perry, Richard Sheridan, Keith Snow, Roger Tryon, and Winston Wilson. The Monterey General Store, Burger King in Lee, McDonalds in Great Barrington and Lee, and the Red Cross all supplied food and drink that was delivered to workers and residents around town a few times each day. Ianne Graham, Nancy Worthington, and Anna Stanton provided massage for knotted muscles. The offices of State Senator Jane Swift and Representative Chris Hodgkins were active and helpful.

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P. MURCOTT

This ancient white oak stands on the hill east of Stevens Lake. It was photographed in February, 1994, and in June, 1995.

THE OBSERVER - MAY

The tornado that tore up Monterey was seen from a distance by our weather observer at about 7:05 Monday evening, May 29. An electric clock at Eagleton School stopped at 7:13, and Michele Brooks glanced at a clock in her car at 7:13 on River Road at Route 23, as the sky darkened, and again at 7:23, after the tornado had passed (see story, page 11).

Conditions that can lead to the formation of tornadoes include the presence of a warm, moist air mass at lower atmospheric levels; drier, cooler air aloft; and a ninety-degree, counterclockwise change in wind direction from the ground to altitudes of 20-30,000 feet. These conditions create what Richard Westergard, of the National Weather Service Forecasting Office in Albany, referred to as a "dynamic lifting device." A tornado is a strong spiralling updraft. It originates in the cyclonic wind that gives rise to what is called a wall cloud, from which a vortex spirals earthward, becoming a tornado when it touches the ground.

Wind speed is the defining factor in rating the force of tornadoes on an ascending scale from one to five. Ratings are based on the observed effects of the storm—tornadoes are so violent, short-lived, and unpredictable as to the course of their lives that little about them can be, or ever is, measured with instruments. An F3 tornado has winds of 158-206 mph, which can cause severe damage to walls and roofs of well-constructed houses, uproot trees, overturn trains, and throw heavy cars. The winds of an F4 tornado reach speeds between 207 and 260 mph. Such winds can level well-constructed houses; structures on weak foundations can be blown for some distance, and cars can be thrown as missiles. The Memorial Day tornado in Monterey, judging by its effects, was at times an F4.

The circular wind of a tornado often spawns peripheral vortices. The energy in these is likely to dissipate quickly as they move away from the strong core spiral. Aerial photographs show the likely effects of such multiple vortices in the area near the intersection of Routes 23 and 57. In another location, on the west side of Curtis Road, there is a stand of even-aged white pines about a quarter mile from the severe damage on Gould Farm, and a patch of it was blown down, while trees virtually all around remained standing. This was probably caused by a spin-off that dissipated as it reached the ground, without ever traveling laterally.

A forest of white pines leveled by the tornado. This is River Road, and the white house in the lower left corner belongs to Glynis Oliver and Will Marsh. The road follows the Konkapot through a narrow ravine; the blasted trees in this photo lie on a steep slope running uphill to the east.

In many places trees were felled all around houses that were little damaged. The forest can prevent the base of the funnel, where wind forces reach their greatest intensity, from reaching the ground. Many trees were broken thirty or forty feet up. Some obstacles in the path of a tornado, like a steep hill, may cut off the funnel, leaving its base broader for a time, until the winds once again spiral into a more sharply focused vortex. Observed in Monterey from a distance of more than four miles as it came over the backside of Butternut Basin (Warner Mountain), the funnel of this tornado was very broad. A mile or so past Butternut, near the 23/57 intersection, the devastation was both broad and extreme.

One final note: some people (John Congdon, for one) observed a dark sky that was brown in color just before the tornado hit. This is typically due to dirt and debris lifted on the updraft and dispersed in the air. His observation fits with that of Anita Carroll-Weldon, who saw small pieces of solid structural debris falling from the sky at about the same time John Congdon saw a brown sky nearby. A green cast to a stormy sky may result when light is refracted by hail.

The rest of the weather for the month of May hardly seems worth mentioning. Here are the numbers anyway.

High temp (5/24)	82°
Low temp. (5/7)	30°
Avg. high temp.	66°
Avg. low temp.	43°
Avg. temp.	55°
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	55.1°
Precip. occ.	14 days
Total precip.	2.86" rain
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	4.54"
High bar. press. (5/28)	30.37"
Low bar. press. (5/19)	29.58"
High humidity (5/29)	97%
Low humidity (5/6)	44%
Avg. wind speed	2.3 mph
High wind gust (5/7)	35 mph

TERRY WEBB

The intersection of Routes 23 (the upper fork) and 57 (the lower fork), looking east. The main vortex of the tornado split the fork and moved toward Stevens Lake, south of Route 23 and east of the intersection. But the faintly visible finger that reaches up the hill about ten o' clock in the picture shows the path of a secondary vortex that thrashed the woods up the hill to the north of 23 just past the intersection.

P. MURLETT

Looking down on the stone house on the north side of Route 23 west of Blue Hill Road, in the curve. The worst damage was done just south of 23 here, but the winds took down five spreading sugar maples that graced the yard of this dwelling, built in 1835. When the house was new, some of the trees now gone were already about fifty years old, according to Wayne Perry, who laid them to rest. Over on Wellman Road, Bob Thieriot writes, "We have been able to rescue one tree, a 150-year-old Japanese lilac, which, 'though on its side with half its root ball exposed for a week, was uprighted by a cherry picker, watered and sawdust mulched, looks happy."

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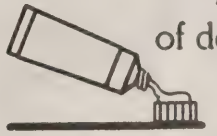

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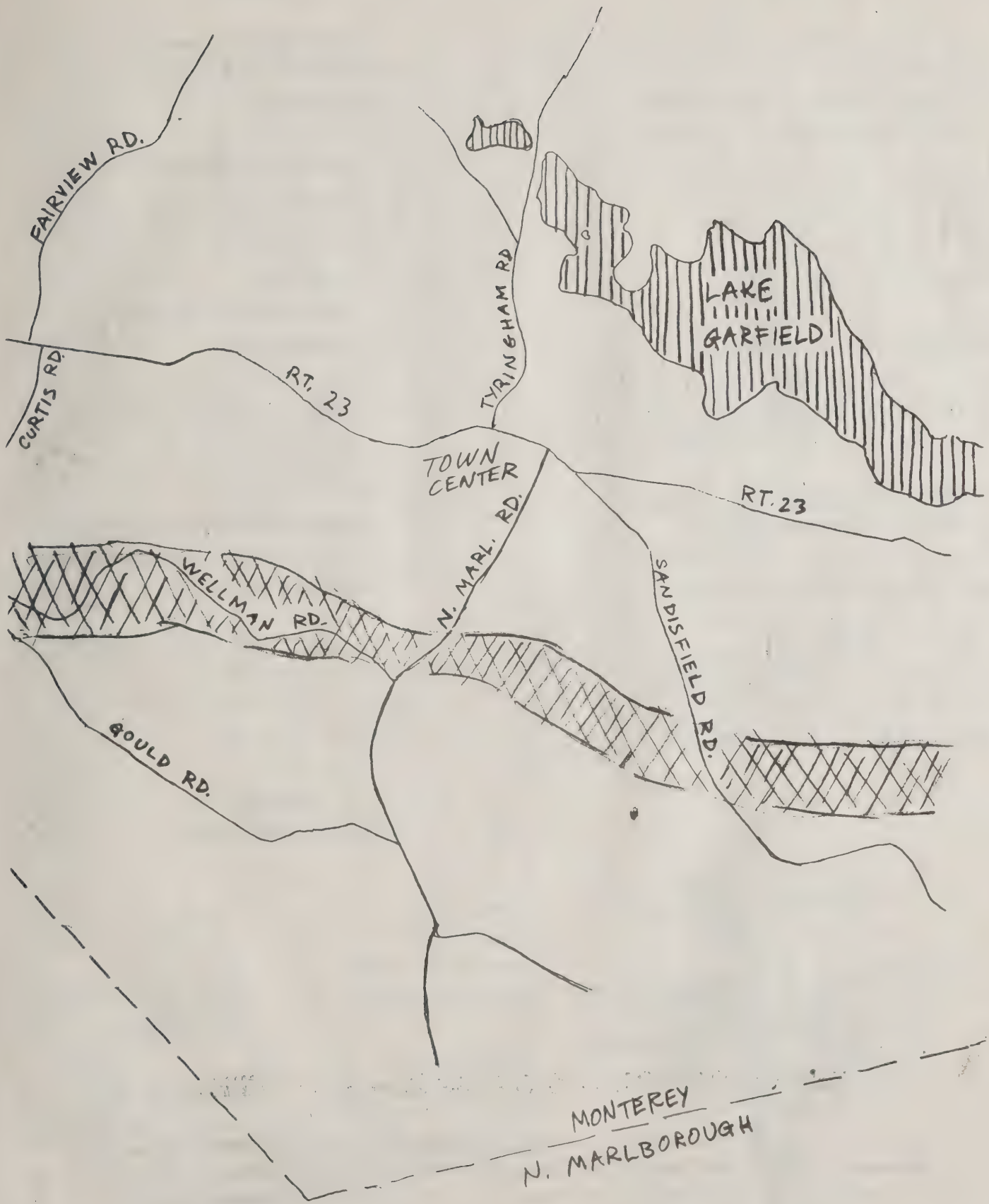
Route 23 Monterey

The Monterey Planning Board

is looking for one interested citizen to serve on the Board. The meetings are productive and fun. To get involved contact Wayne Burkhardt at 528-1114.

TRACK OF TORNADO THROUGH MONTEREY

The east-west, cross-hatched band shows the track of the tornado. Damage along the path varied widely; the last of it occurred in the woods above Marion Thompson's farm on Sandisfield Road. Driving east toward the intersection of Routes 23 and 57, the land is suddenly shorn of trees and a view is now open clear across to the prominent knob of the Pinnacle, east of River Road and more than two miles distant.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TORNADO

Counterclockwise horror spins through trees,
leaves stubble twenty feet tall.
Trees fly open overhead. This twisted cloud spits
a roadside fragment green as

leaves. Stubble twenty feet tall
(maple, ash, red oak, white pine) frames
a roadside fragment green as
the meadow it now defines as "east."

Maple, ash, red oak, white pine fly
apart like balloons. Wood lines
the meadow it once defined. East,
west, south, the damage is worse: buildings blow

apart like balloons. Would lines
on poles snap as easily in the middle
west? South, the damage is worse; buildings blow
like cottonwood fluff. Death scythes through

on wings, too easily. In the middle,
trees fly open. Overhead, this twisted cloud spits
its cottonwood fluff. Death scythes through
counterclockwise. Horror spins through trees.

— MaryKate Jordan

EURYDICE

I am a priestess of the wood
I lead the lion by his tongue
lilies among

I lead the horses by their manes
through grot and fern
to where the wood ducks turn

I lead my love
to where the amber-scented moon
lies in the lap of noon

a woman rosy wild and free
I give him musk and honey
where he kisses me

a dreamer under leaves, I warm his night
and lead him up dawn's golden-moted singing
back to light.

— A. O. Howell

SPRING

(Inspired by Valerie Worth)

In spring, the old
Dusty, dirt roads
Become murky, mud trails
That welcome bare feet.

Fragrant flowers
Burst through the soil
Like rain,
Bursting from a cloud.

As I run,
The perfumed, warm, wind
Plays with my hair
While pearls of sweat
Arrive on my face.

Resting in the shade
Of a tall, bright green tree
Exploding with color,
I drift into
Silent slumber.

— Katie Vallianos

IN MEMORIAM

I was a tree
Until my brother Wind visited with his rage,
Now my skin is screaming,
My cover blown,
I have no place to hide.
Torn, split, ravaged
I feel my mysteries revealed
The darkness unshaded.
My soul exposed...

I cry out to my family—
A fearless nation standing tall
Within the phases of the moon

But I hear nothing from them
Only a metallic silence
And the oily scent of gun metal

My arms reach out to my brothers and sisters,
But they are no longer there for me
They lie, twisted and wrenched
Pulled from their earth anchor,
Lamenting the dislocation.
They seem helpless
Their tough skin peeled and wounded
Fragile. Unprotected.

I am a tree,
I am Bosnia,
I am Chechnya
I am Ethiopia
I am Oklahoma City
Starved, scarred, abandoned
Now I am Hecuba
I am lonely.
In the midst of summer's arrival,
I am cold.

I am humbled by my brother Wind,
His force is undeniable, unstoppable.
As I make the transition to the other side,
I am grateful to see the light
And know the magnitude of the darkness
For I have lived blind to his power, disconnected from the myth.

I now see my reflection
In the naked essence of truth...
I see myself.

The sun's rays penetrate
My broken skin,
Saplings embrace my nakedness
I will soon cross over.
In the unveiling of my surroundings
The path is clear.
Others take my remaining energy.

I too emerge, unveiled, lucid within the summer sky
I reach for my brothers and sisters.

— Meryl Joseph

BIDWELL HOUSE NEWS

Making your plans for Fourth of July weekend? Entertain your family and friends with a house tour, a picnic in the perennial gardens, and a hike on our woodland trails. There's lots to do, and you don't have to travel outside of Monterey. We're open Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Come and enjoy The Bidwell House!

On July 14, the museum is sponsoring a "Full Moon Owl Prowl." You'll learn about the natural history of owls, hike to their habitat in the woods and learn their calls. There's a good chance the owls will answer you back. A great evening of fun for the bird lovers in the family. The workshop begins at 9 p.m. Please bring a flashlight and bug repellant. Admission is free.

What better way to spend a truly old-fashioned summer afternoon than a lawn concert in the beautiful gardens of The Bidwell House. Saturday, July 22, the museum will host The Old Grey Goose, from Freedom, Maine. This trio performs old-time country dance music of New England, singing and playing fiddles, button accordion, guitar, banjo, harmonica, fiddlesticks, and bones. In concert, the group presents stories, dances, and songs depicting life in old New England. Their tunes are rooted in the musical heritage of the region's English, Scots-Irish, French, and Scandinavian settlers.

The museum and grounds open at 11 a.m. Saturday for picnics and house tours. This event will be held rain or shine (a tent will be set up on the lawn). There is ample parking in the lower field (the rocks have been removed). We ask that no dogs or alcohol be brought onto the property.

PEGGY MCKENNA

L to R: Dave Protsik, Carter Newell, Jeff McKeen—The Old Grey Goose—performing old-time New England tunes from the rich musical heritage of the region's English, Scots-Irish, French and Scandinavian settlers, 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 22, at The Bidwell House, Monterey, MA. (413) 528-6888.

Tickets are available at The Bidwell House or the Monterey General Store. Admission is $8 for adults and $5 for children. Museum members must get their tickets at The Bidwell House (in person, by phone, or by mail) to get their special discount rate.

Partial funding for the concert comes from the New England Foundation for the Arts, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Monterey Cultural Council, and the Cultural Councils of Egremont/ Alford, Great Barrington, Lee, New Marlboro, Otis, Sheffield, and Tyringham.

The museum is in great need of volunteers for events, and throughout the season. Any amount of time is appreciated. Postering, taking tickets, giving tours, gardening—the list is endless, and the amount of time can be as little or as much as you can give. It's fun to be involved behind the scenes, and your help would be a great boost to The Bidwell House. Please call 528-6888. Thank you.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the concert July 22!

— Anita Carroll-Weldon]

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CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Here are the July and August programs of Family Support Network:

Tuesdays (July 11-August 22): Parent-child playgroups at Housatonic School playground, 10 a.m.–12 noon. A parent or caregiver is asked to remain with the child during the program.

Wednesdays (July 12-August 23): Parent-child playgroups at York Lake, Sandisfield State Park, 3–5 p.m. A parent or caregiver is asked to remain with the child during the program. A fee waiver has been obtained by Children's Health Program for these Wednesdays. Follow Route 23 south from Great Barrington and bear right on Route 57, which will take you to Sandisfield State Park. Swimming lessons will also be available. For more information about swimming lessons, call Loren Kinnaman, 258-0240.

Thursdays (July 13-August 24): Parent-child playgroups at Undermountain School playground in Sheffield, 10 a.m.–12 noon. A parent or caregiver is asked to remain with the child during the program. The Clothing and Toy Exchange will be open in Room A-3 at the same time.

All the above activities will be cancelled for rain. For more information, please call Claudette at 528-9311.

July 19: Field trip to Holyoke Children's Museum. Plan to leave Great Barrington by 9:30 a.m. Follow the Mass Turnpike to exit 4, take Route 91 north to exit 16, follow brown signs for Heritage Park. Fee is $2.50 per child, children under one year are free, and parents are free, too. This is a museum for children, having a variety of activities such as a bookmobile, television station, grocery store, science experiments, bubble makers, arts and crafts, doctor's office, mazes, blocks, etc. We are scheduled to go in as a group at 11 a.m. Bring a picnic lunch—we can eat inside or out.

July 26: Social and picnic for parents and families with children from birth to six months; 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. at Bryant School playground. Come meet other parents. Refreshments will be served. In case of rain meet at CHP, 54 Castle Street, Great Barrington.

August 17: Blueberry picking at Mount Washington. Meet at CHP at 10:30 a.m. Pack a picnic lunch as well as pails or baskets for the blueberries. Please call nearer the date for an estimate of the cost of the blueberries. Raindate, August 22.

— Claudette Callahan

P. MURKETT

Leonard Weber's lithographs are available at half price, $25–$45 each, to raise money for repairs on his gallery, and to help his neighbors.

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THE TOWN

Though the afternoon of Memorial Day ended in disaster, it certainly began in a red, white, and blue, flag-waving mood at the annual town parade: a color guard of local veterans; the marching band of Mount Everett high School with spirit squad; the moving speeches and laying of wreathes to honor veterans; the exciting team of Ray Tryon's Percherons, gleaming and groomed and elegantly harnessed to the old fire wagon. Also participating in the festivities were the Monterey Pee Wee and Little League teams, and Sudi Baker riding her horse. After the parade, participants and spectators enjoyed four or five hundred hot dogs and drinks served by the Select Board.

"If this [tornado] had to happen anywhere, it couldn't have happened at any place with a more close and caring community than Monterey has." This comment, made at the June 12 meeting of the Select Board, has been echoed many times in many ways. It was June 3 when the Select Board officially declared a state of emergency following the tornado. By the June 5 meeting of the Select Board, $90,000 in local funds had been spent; by the June 12 meeting, the figure had risen to $125,000; by June 19, $140,000; and by June 26, slightly moire than $140,000. Excavators worked at $85/hour, and a tub grinder (whole tree chipper) cost $250/hour, two examples that demonstrate how quickly the expense of cleaning up can rise.

But on the bright side, it was reported on June 12 that the Town would incur no further significant private contracting expense. There had been hope for National Guard assistance in clearing River Road, but it was not realized. FEMA will likely provide some reimbursement of Town expenditures, but federal assistance to private home and business owners is currently uncertain. The Massachusetts Highway Department has lately provided crews and equipment for cleanup on private land at no cost.

At the June 12 meeting, the Board set guidelines for distribution of funds from the Monterey Tornado Relief Fund (see related article, pp. 13-14).

Dick Busch of R. A. Busch Forestry Services, Inc., of Ashley Falls, appeared before the Select Board on June 12 to respond to complaints that his crew had illegally removed logs from the disaster site on River Road. He said the work had been undertaken for free, and that he submitted a bill at the request of Incident Commander Ray Tryon. He told the Board that the bill should not be paid.

Also appearing before the Board that evening were Massachusetts State Police Officers James R. Talbot and Paul E. Cesan, to whom the Board expressed its gratitude for their helpful, efficient, and polite presence in town during the state of emergency. The officers requested an up-dated map showing all the road names and house numbers in Monterey. Board Chair Stefan Grotz will draft thank-you notes to volunteers and state officials.

Paving bids were opened on June 12 as well. The bid of Lane Construction Company of Meriden, Connecticut, was received and accepted at $28.83 per ton, to pave sections of Fox Hill Road, Hupi Road, New Marlborough Road, Tyringham Road, and Blue Hill Road.

On June 19, the Monterey Historical Society, represented by Cynthia Weber and Barbara Tryon, outlined alternate plans for handicapped access to the Monterey Library. They proposed a ramp gradually elevated from the road to the library's front door, rather than through the Historical Society room on the east end of the library building, as had been previously proposed. The Board decided to postpone the bidding.

On June 26 the Board met with Tree Warden Roger Tryon to discuss storm damage. The Board advised him to finish the tree work as soon as possible, while the town is still under the Emergency Act.

— Jane Black

Monterey United Church of Christ

Sunday Services · 10 a.m.

(Child care available)

Adult discussion/response to Homily/sermon, 11 a.m.

For assistance & information:

Keith Snow (Pastor) 528-5850
Bob Emmel (Clerk, Trustee) 528-1321
Tom O'Brien (Trustee) 269-7471
Judy Hayes (Worship) 528-1874

With a prayer request, or to join the Prayer Chain:

MaryKate Jordan 528-5557
Mary or Ray Ward 528-9243
Judy Hayes 528-1874

Prayer: Personal and Scriptural

An adult presentation and discussion led by MaryKate Jordan, exploring both the personal impulse to prayer and some of the structures for prayer found in scripture. We will work with the two to find new depth in familiar prayers and create new prayers of our own. All are welcome!

Monday, July 17, 1995, 7:30–9 p.m.

NEWS FROM STATE SENATOR JANE SWIFT

It gives me great pleasure to report that the Fiscal 1996 state budget, recently approved by the Legislature and signed by Governor William Weld, includes several items which will directly and indirectly benefit the Town of Monterey.

One of my chief priorities during budget negotiations was ensuring that cities and towns are fairly compensated in the area of local aid. I am thrilled that we were able to earmark an increase of $51 million from lottery revenues, which will be sent back to communities across the state.

In addition, the new spending plan includes $6.9 million for payments in lieu of taxes for state-owned land. This represents an increase of $400,000. As rural areas contain larger portions of state-owned land, these payments become increasingly important. It is the duty of the Commonwealth to live up to this responsibility. While this does not reflect full funding, which is my ultimate goal, this is certainly a step in the right direction.

The issue of obligation leads to another budget item, which I am extremely pleased has been fully funded—Education Reform. In 1993 the Legislature passed the Education Reform Act and therefore committed itself to substantially increasing direct aid to school districts each year. I am proud to have played a role in keeping that promise, as it is a tremendous investment in our future.

Another important item that I was able to secure in the Fiscal 1996 state budget is a rider which will provide for a separate juvenile court in Berkshire County. Previously, Berkshire and Hampden Counties were considered to be within a single district. Although caseloads have increased in Berkshire County, juvenile justices were sharing their time between Pittsfield and Springfield. This was causing tremendous case delays. The new provision separates the districts and requires one justice to remain in Berkshire County at all times, thereby avoiding an additional backlog of cases within the Berkshire County court system.

Lastly but very importantly, I was able to secure $4,522,000 for Regional Tourism Councils. Tourism is a vital industry in Berkshire County, and it is important that we build upon our strengths in order to increase the future economic vitality of the area as a whole.

As always, it is a pleasure serving you. If anyone has questions or comments about this or any other issue, please contact my offices at (617) 722-1625 (Boston) or (413) 442-5240 (Pittsfield).

— State Senator Jane Swift

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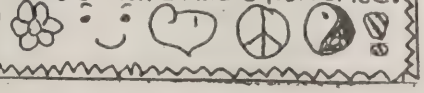

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BREAD, TORNADO, AND LIFE

My interest and joy in baking bread was, undoubtedly, stimulated by an elderly lady in northern Vermont many years ago. One afternoon I stepped into her kitchen and was immediately transported by the delicious aroma of bread baking in the oven. I am not sure I had a slice of warm bread when she pulled the loaves from the oven, but somewhere deep in my person that event registered. Several years later I started to do my own baking and continue to do so today.

I continue to be impressed with the impact of that very simple event on my life and am led to believe that our lives are more significantly measured by event than by markings and flashings on clocks. Certainly the summer of 1995 will be remembered by the inaugural visit of the tornado. The time when the utility lines went down and with them the lights, TVs, telephones, faxes, and computers will be recalled. But what will probably stand out will be the destruction which will linger on in sight and memory for many years. The stories will carry the event. And in a profound manner it is the story that carries our lives.

I was talking to a lady in the Registry of Births and Deaths in Staffordshire, England, where I was born, to inquire about the time of my birth. "Oh," she said, "the time of birth is not recorded on birth certificates in England." As an afterthought, she said, "They do that in Scotland but not in England." Then I thought to myself, is it not the event of birth that informs the time rather than the other way around. Of course, it is the event that gives meaning to the moment, the time. But we are accustomed to thinking otherwise in a society that is ruled by clocks and schedules.

The Scriptures are essentially stories informing the reader of how God was invading and investing in the lives of the Hebrew tribes, the Israelite nation and the early Christian community. And we, like the people of old, are known by the events. In its own way the storm of May 29, at approximately 7:10 p.m., will be remembered more by the forest transformed into a wasteland of downed trees and damaged houses, by the friendly aid of neighbors nearby and far away. Could it be that the greatest lesson of that event lies in shaking us free of our timebound and narrow ways of seeing and hearing, and allowing us the privilege of living our lives once again with a renewed sense of love and compassion which has no bounds and has no time frame?

— Keith Snow, Pastor
Monterey United Church of Christ

MONTEREY LIBRARY NOTES

Summer is here, and at the Monterey Library that means it's time for the summer reading program. It's a great way to encourage kids to read all summer long.

The theme this year is "Reading Is Natural," and it is part of a statewide program developed by the Massachusetts Regional Library System. The program will start on June 19, when children can pick up their reading logs at the library. There are separate logs for children who are not yet reading and those who are experienced readers. Prizes will be awarded to children who complete their reading logs. Participants are also eligible for discount coupons for various attractions across the state.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, July 29, because that's the day of the annual Monterey Library Book Sale. We are hoping it will be even bigger and better this year, and are looking for donations of books. If you've finished reading those Christmas presents or have gotten a jump on your vacation reading, how about donating those books to the book sale? Except for out-of-date textbooks and encyclopedias, we would love to have your old books.

— Laurie Shaw

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Parishioners gathered in a circle during the Sunday service after the tornado for a celebration of life and healing. Shown here are Ray Ward, Alice Howell, Walter Andersen, Judy Hayes, Nicky Hearon, Mary Thorn, Bob Emmel, and Sally Emmel.

MCLAUGHLIN-WILSON SCHOLARSHIP

The McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship was established to assist Monterey residents in post-secondary education.

The first awards were made this year to two graduates of Monument Mountain Regional High School. Joshua Aerie, who will attend Oberlin College, and Paul Gregory Makuc, who will attend St. Anselm College, were the recipients. Congratulations to both boys! Their qualifications were outstanding, and we're sure they'll represent Monterey well in their future studies.

The scholarship fund was set up by Edith Wilson, and grants will be awarded annually by a committee composed of one member of the Select Board, one member of the Park Commission, one Monterey Library trustee, the School Committee representative, and the librarian of the Monterey Library. The fund is administered by Berkshire-Taconic Foundation.

Contributions will be gratefully accepted at any time, and may be made by contacting any committee member or Virgil Stucker at the Berkshire-Taconic Foundation.

— Librarian Anne Makuc, Chair
Selectman Peter Brown
Park Commissioner James Thomas
Library Trustee John Higgins
School Committee Rep. Donna Burkhart

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COUNCIL ON AGING

Senior citizens, be cool! Heat stress is a serious condition that poses a health threat to many people, particularly the elderly. Temperatures of ninety degrees and above can cause heat stress, especially when the humidity is high. Heat stress can be prevented by:

- Using head protection (hat, umbrella).
- Avoiding exertion.
- Wearing light weight clothing.
- Staying inside during hottest time of day.
- Drinking plenty of fluids (not alcohol).
- Taking cool showers or baths.

Symptoms to be aware of are: fatigue, nausea, confusion, dizziness, throbbing headache, rapid heartbeat. If you experience any of these symptoms during periods of hot weather, consult your physician.

The Elder Services of Berkshire County will sponsor a "Senior Picnic '95" to be held at Tanglewood July 14, 11 a.m.–3 p.m. The suggested donation is $4. Tickets (on sale through July 7) are available at 66 Wendell Avenue in Pittsfield and all Elder Services Nutrition Sites. If you need special accommodations or assistance, call 1-800-544-5242.

— Pauline Nault

THANK YOU, NEIGHBORS

In the wake of the tornado that hit southern Berkshire County last month, which resulted in both tragedy and destruction, I think it is very important at this time to be thankful for our neighbors.

While I know the only towns severely affected by the storm were Monterey, Great Barrington, and Egremont, which lay directly in the funnel's path, I also realize and am very heartened by the fact that emergency professionals and residents in general from all over the county, state, and even country were ready, willing, and able to assist their neighbors in need.

I would hazard a guess that I am not the first to express my appreciation to all the neighbors who lent a helping hand. However, I do not think that saying it just one time is sufficient. So here goes—thank you, thank you, thank you!

In addition to the immediate response of our families, our neighbors, and the emergency professionals who made sure that victims of the storm had food and shelter, we had to begin the daunting task of cleaning up and rebuilding the devastation.

Immediately following the storm, my office was barraged with questions and concerns from both victims and concerned friends and relatives regarding how they could handle the destruction of their homes and property. In response to these inquiries, I set up the Disaster Information Center at Berkshire Community College's South County campus.

The center was staffed by dedicated representatives from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Attorney General's office, the state Insurance Division, the Department of Environmental Management, and the American Red Cross, as well as members of my staff. Over 200 people utilized the center and its services during its six days of operation.

The next step in the recovery process is to request that an emergency declaration be issued by the Small Business Administration. Officials from MEMA are working on this declaration, which, if approved, would make available 4% to 8% interest loans over thirty years to homeowners or renters whose property was damaged.

As you may well know, Governor William Weld has given preliminary damage figures to President Clinton and has asked him to declare the region a federal disaster area. The early information released from the governor's office stated that he has requested $1 million in supplementary federal emergency assistance. These figures are only preliminary and can be adjusted as the final costs of the damages are assessed.

At this point in time, I am hopeful that we have been in contact with every person who was in need of support and financial assistance as a result of the storm. If you know that not to be the case, please contact my office as soon as possible so that we may remedy that situation. As a neighbor myself, I continue to stand ready to help in any way that I can.

State Representative Christopher J. Hodgkins
Fourth Berkshire District

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CONTRIBUTORS

Thanks for sending in hundreds of address cards. We'll trim the mailing list next month, so there's still time if you haven't mailed yours yet. If you want the *News*, we want to be sure you get it! For contributions this month we thank:

Robert & Joan Caluori
Joan Weinstein
Don & Joanie Wolff
William & Joyce Pasco
Diane Gell
Esther Silverman
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Jeffrey C. Bell
Arthur & Elsa Bronstein
H. Louise Burns
Edward W. Moreton
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Roger & Robin Imhoff

Susan Weiner & Christopher Aidun ("Although we always enjoy the *Monterey News*, we especially liked the April 1 edition. Thanks for the laughs, as well as the news.")

Judy Grant
Leslie Naughton & Jeffrey Rubin
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James J. Aubuchon
Peter M. H. Thomas
Mr. & Mrs. T. W. Cinque

Mary Spaulding ("I love receiving the *Monterey News*!")

Lawrence Heald & Deborah Rankin ("We loved the April Fool's issue. The *News* is such a good way for us to keep informed about what's going on in Monterey, which we continue to miss terribly.")

Melvin & Katherine Kroft
Adrienne O'Connell
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Michael & Lillian Wright
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Stacy Tobin Carmichael ("Please continue to send me the *Monterey News*—I read it front to back every month, particularly lingering over Ellen's and Bonner's articles and David McAllester's nature notes—and I'm back in a very special place and time in my and my family's life. Many thanks!")

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ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Goodbye, Alabama

...Hello, New England

I'm Max, the biggest of Joan's dogs. It's so hot in Alabama—97 degrees—and the humidity is a hundred percent! I dig a cool hole in the garden—bliss. But Joan comes storming out, "STOP THAT, MAX!"

After flea-bathing the new pup, "Miss Katy," and her mother Yorkie, "Lady Sue," her grandmother, "Honey Bear," and her poodle father (that's me, Max) Joan loads us (and the cat, "Mio") into the camper. The red Toyota is hooked up behind, and we're off!

I don't mind living in the camper. Dry food and water always right there. Papers for the new pup, and we have Joan with us all the time! I sit (or sleep) on the passenger's seat, with the window and vent open. The wind is great, but when we're stopped, that's another story!

Up 65. Woods on both sides of the road. Everything's green. Much rain. A sign: Don't litter—keep Alabama the beautiful. Signs to: Grace Garland, Pine Apple, Fort Deposit, Hope Hull. Trucks with pine logs. Lot of cops. Uphill into Montgomery, so the gas needle goes down in a hurry. At Stuckey-Texaco Joan was stuck in a long line to pay. A school bus on an outing. Joan didn't seem to mind. Into a 76 Truckstop for the night. Joan went inside, with purse in one hand and a toothbrush in the other. She was gone a long time, probably eating in an air-conditioned room! When she came back, cooler (a little bit) by now, we all went for a long walk (the cat, tied, going in and out of the camper door). We walked through the four lines of giant trucks to grass and trees.

Back in the camper, we settled down (after beef-chicken-liver dog food) for the night. None of us even barked...because we couldn't hear people going by due to the constant noise of all the motors, and the coming and going of trucks all through the night. We were asleep instantly, and Joan was the first.

At truckstops, the restaurant is open twenty-four hours a day. Joan came back after breakfast at 5:30 a.m., and we were off. We were on 85 now. Still wooded, but fewer pines. We saw The E. V. Smith Research Center of Auburn University. Gently rolling hills. Yes, Alabama is beautiful! It was cloudy, helps a lot on a hot day. Over the Chattahoochee River into Georgia. Sign: We're Glad You Have Georgia On Your Mind! Signs to West Point and Pine Mountains. Only clear radio stations are church music. A turn-off for Warm Springs, FDR's White House. There's Peachtree City. Joan murmurs, "Rhett and Scarlet." Joan finds a big truck going our pace, in and out, around slow cars, going fast downhill, for the big uphills. Joan follows him closely. She says, "I'm with you, honey!"

Into Atlanta (can't go around it). Rain comes down in buckets. Atlanta is always the pits, but today... Going through cities is for the birds, anyhow! Once out in green fields, farms, and trees, Joan breathes easier. A sign: Car Sharing—The Georgia Way.

We took the little-used Route 11, very lovely, up to 25. Joan said, OH, I MISS THE MOUNTAINS—IT HAS BEEN EIGHT MONTHS! (Joan was born, and lived, 5,500 feet high in the Rockies of Montana.) There's the Smokies in the distance as we go into South Carolina.

Into North Carolina, and the Stowells (formerly of Monterey). The camper was parked in the woods on the Green River, next to Jim Stowell's mill. The door was opened. OH, BOY! I jumped out, the two Yorkies after me. We ran and ran. That little pup, she couldn't make the jump. A loud squeak-bark, on and on, until somebody lifted her down. (She squeak-barks often, to get up on the bed, or down, or just to be hugged.)

Two beautiful days there. On the brick patio, with all the flowering shrubs

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in front of the house (built way up on a hill), we dogs were put in our dog pen, out of the sun, with food and water. Joan and Jean were lying in the sun. They talked for hours. When Stew came home with granddaughter, Jean went in to cook dinner. We left on Sunday.

(A week after we got to Monterey, Joan got word that gentle, caring Jean Stowell had died.)

Up to Ashville, then east on 40. Old 40 is pretty bumpy! On the radio, an Appalachian storyteller. Beautiful morning. Over the Black Mountains. Wildflowers galore! Ahead were mountains and mountains. Going down now (yesterday, we crossed the Easter Divide, 2,340 feet). Down in the valley the sun touched the stream of cars...looked like a yellow ribbon.

Sign to Tanglewood. Into big, big Winston-Salem, buildings going up. Right into Greensboro, bigger still (Amtrak). Not in the sticks anymore! Signs for Green Levee, Ruin Creek Road, and Buttocksville. (What a name!) We found a truckstop, now Exxon. Joan needed a blanket that night. I burrowed down. The others did the same thing. Of course, the pup was under the blanket!

Next day into Virginia and to Tappahannock, a lovely little town on the Rappahannock River. Met Sue Moody White (of Otis, MA) and her gracious friend, Agnes, at the famous Lawry's for lunch. Two days later we were off for The North.

We took a new way. Up 301. Missed, and over a big long bridge over the Atlantic to Maryland's East Shore. The cost was $7.50, so in a pig's eye Joan wouldn't go back across. Joan stopped for some expensive clam cakes. The region looked like the Midwest. Flat. Flat. Farms far

apart. No people. No cars. No trucks. What do you know, a new Howard Johnson! Empty farms. Abandoned schools. Over the Sarafras River. Some elaborate farmhouses. Grain elevators.

Into Philadelphia. Hopelessly lost. At a gas station a handsome young truck driver told Joan to go from 95 north on 476 to 9.

Pennsylvania is full of great barns topped by silver roofs with stone foundations. The sign said ENDLESS MOUNTAINS. The sign was right! Sign to the town of Horseheads. Three dead fawns along the highway. Finger Lakes. New leaves just coming out in the forest. Sign to Bath.

Just before we got to 80, we took 209—what a tourist mecca—wonderful! Quaint shops, restaurants (like Route 1 in Maine).

WE have had it for the day. Truckstop on 80, under construction. No place to park the camper/Toyota. Rainy. Cold. We had to change our spot several times. We ate dinner in the camper. Sweaters, all the blankets, we finally got some sleep. At the crack of dawn, we got out of there. Further north. Almost to Canada. (All the way from the Gulf!) Into Rochester, NY, to wait for Joan's camper buddy, Kay. She led us to her apartment, many miles across that enormous city. Parked next to woods right in front of a two-story apartment house: lawn, trees, balconies, and gardens. Nice. Nice.

Joan tucked us in and left with different clothes and shampoo. Was gone a long time, but she came back to sleep with us.

Our final day. Five and a half hours on I-90 is so boring! Cloudy and cool. Mass., here we are! I was here last summer, only a puppy of six months. Joan stopped to buy their last heater. Into the woods, car taken off, camper parked. We were HOME! Look at all those trees!

— Max

(as told to Joan Woodard Reed)

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***

I will meet with you at your home in Monterey.

MY WORTHY & HONEST ADVERSARIES

June in the garden is a time of fierce battle for me and about eighteen species of animal adversaries. While they would not for one second consider themselves to be united against me, it is true that none of them are on my side. I don't fight all eighteen at once, but neither do I get many breathers from the first mice in the April pea beds to the deer in November who come munching after Brussels sprouts and kale.

For the most part my enemies in the garden are much, much smaller than I am, so they have teeny brains. You would think I could outsmart them, and I like to think that in a fair trial I could. But what I have which is teeny, compared to them, is number. There is only one of me and of them there are, in some cases, zillions.

About this time every year, just when I have held my own with the mice, voles and chipmunks, the much smaller creatures make their appearances. The potato bugs sprout the same day the potatoes do, all grown up and ready to lay eggs. I have two kinds in my garden: the broad, roundish ones called Colorado Potato Beetles, and the slim, quick ones which are a version of cucumber beetles, only more orange with black stripes instead of yellow with black stripes. Both of these are old buddies by now, a part of my potato-growing life for twenty years. My first crop of potatoes on this sandy hillside must have been the first one in at least fifty years, but the beetles found it right away, and have been with us ever since. They lay their shiny orange eggs on the undersides of leaves in clusters of three or four to maybe fifty or more. When these hatch, they make hungry, crawling larvae which can leave a potato patch looking like a little field of sticks in no time. You just have to be ready to do battle.

Adult Colorado Potato Beetle

For me this consists of basic squashing. My preference is to dispatch the first adults of the season, the ones which have overwintered in the dirt and come up at the same time as the potato foliage. Any that I miss will lay hundreds of eggs, which are a nice bright color and can easily be spotted against the green, but in order to find them I have to go creeping around on all fours with my head sort of upside down. This gives me a stiff neck.

The larvae are pretty easy to spot and don't move fast, so they can be picked off. Like any of us, they are squashable, but not only is this messy, it is also dangerous. I once was on low-level egg patrol when I found and squashed a fat potato bug larva. With my head upside-down I was disoriented and managed to squirt myself in the eye. I have put some bad things into my eyes, mostly by mistake, but this was by far the worst—worse than bleach, worse than ear drops, to name just a couple. I have a plastic wading pool in the garden which I now use for sloshing the caustic insides of potato bug larvae out of my eyes.

Another larval adversary just now is the cutworm, or caterpillar of the noctuid moth. Cutworms stay curled up and innocent in the dirt by day, but at night they head for the surface and move purposefully down a row of broccoli seedlings knocking them down one by one with a few quick chomps. Visit your row in the morning and it will look like a little chainsaw has been by. I always dig around recent fellings until I find the little culprit, which I then render lifeless and drop in the dirt, maybe to fertilize any surviving but traumatized young broccolis.

The list of animal trouble-makers goes on and on: springtails, leaf miners, slugs, flea beetles, dogs (we are recently dog-free, ourselves, but some of our best friends still have dogs), cats (they take dust baths in newly planted beds), porcupines, raccoons, woodchucks, cedar waxwings (they like strawberries). We also have occasional horses, goats, and chickens in our garden. Mostly these creatures belong to us, or at least live here, but the other day I spotted our neighbor's chickens gulping down worms in my compost pile, only a hundred feet from the lettuce and strawberries.

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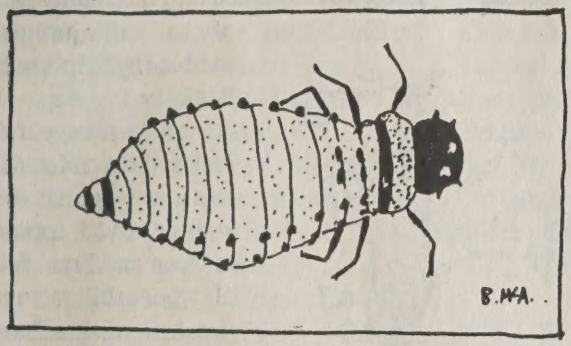
With all this trouble, I sometimes wonder what keeps me cheerful in the garden. Am I some kind of sadistic killer of small creatures? Nah. I haven't reached the point even of getting a grim-revenge sort of pleasure from mangling the cheerful little striped potato beetles. Is it that growing vegetables is just so easy it would be a bore if it weren't for all this complexity, all this study of various animal lives? I don't think so. The poet Anne Bradstreet wrote in her *Meditations Devine and Moral*, in 1664, "....if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome." This sounds suspiciously like the old saw about hitting one's head against a brick wall and how good it feels when one stops.



Larva of the Colorado Potato Beetle. One-half inch.

The weird truth is, I am by now pals with my garden pests. Hah, you say, tell that to the cutworm you are in the act of yanking in two and dropping in the bean bed. Well, I guess "pals" is not quite the word, but they sure do feel like old friends and worthy foes. They are lively and successful. They like the same kind of food I do and they do me the honor of coming back year after year for more. I like trying to figure out what to do about them without resorting to full-scale chemical holocaust, and I do admire their life-styles. It makes me a little lonely to realize this admiration is not mutual, but I can't stay lonely for long in a record-breaking chipmunk year like this one. This will never happen, but if I ever got up to the garden and found out it was just me and a bunch of plants, then I'd feel lonely.

— Bonner J. McAllester

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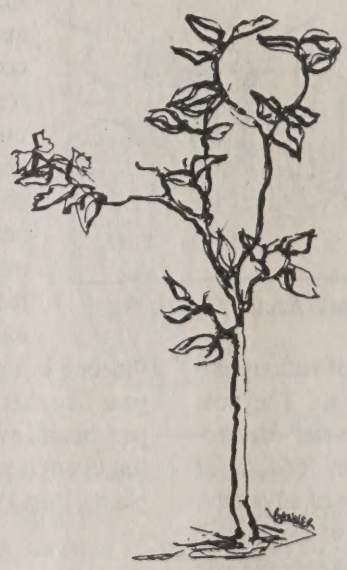
PERSONAL NOTES

Our congratulations to **Richard** and **Diana Piepho** of Beartown Road on the birth of their first child, a son, whom they named Judah Richard. Judah was born on May 17 at Fairview Hospital in Great Barrington, weighing a healthy nine pounds!

Kudos to **Kevin Ohman**, son of Conrad and Margie Ohman of Blue Hill Road, and to **Jason Tanner**, son of Brian and Dale Tanner of Gould Road, who were two of eight Mt. Everett Regional High School students selected to attend the American Legion Boys State program at Bentley College in Waltham, June 17–23. About 800 boys statewide attended the event, an intensive program providing participants with a realistic view of governmental operations.

Joshua Aerie and **Paul Makuc** graduated from Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington in ceremonies held at Tanglewood on June 4. Both Josh and Paul were recipients of Rotary Club Awards, as well as the first scholarships awarded from the McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship Fund, established in 1994 by Edith L. Wilson under her name and the name of Marjorie S. McLaughlin. Edith's love of Monterey and its youth prompted her to offer Monterey high school graduates financial assistance for their further education. Hats off to both Paul and Josh and to the generosity and caring of Edith Lavinia Wilson. Josh plans to attend Oberlin College in Ohio to study music and liberal arts, and Paul plans to study criminal justice at St. Anselm College in New Hampshire.

Very special congratulations to our own **Natasha Grotz**, who received her B.A. from Dartmouth College on June 11, an event made especially memorable by the presence of President William J. Clinton. The President received an honorary degree, delivered a stirring commencement address, and offered a handshake and personal greeting to each graduate as his or her degree was presented—a special moment for each of them. With her biology major and German minor, Tasha has immediate plans to travel on U.S. soil with German friends, and she has tentatively accepted a biology teaching and ski coaching position at Waterville Valley, New Hampshire, for the coming year. Tasha plans to use this time as a nonstudent to determine whether it will in fact be medical school or life in the ever-beckoning ski mountains making jewelry. Stay tuned!



Heard any good fish tales lately? Well, it seems **Rod Palmer**, **Henry Wolfer**, and **Art Funk** had quite a time of their trip to Lake Oswego. One of them (namely, Rod) accidentally dropped the keys to the pickup truck overboard, in only about six feet of water. He left to get magnets and assistance, and in the meantime Art decided he could get them himself. He did succeed in attracting some attention, we hear, and in muddying the waters, making it more difficult to retrieve those darned keys. It was a fairly good night's sleep on the boat after all, and a SCUBA diver from the local fire department came to their rescue the next day. With the keys now on floaters, the hearty souls plan to return for that "big one that got away" soon.

Very special wishes to **Dean** and **Fran Amidon**, who celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on June 18. Their four sons, Skip, Peter, Phil and Jay, their wives, and all of their ten grandchildren joined them in Monterey for a few days of joyous celebration. The special day began with church, where musician son Peter and family sang and performed at the coffee hour, and ended with a lovely dinner at the Inn on the Green in New Marlborough. Highlights included a fun "profile" song written and performed by Peter and the presentation of a photo collage assembled by Skip's wife Blakely Ann—a "through-the-years" look at the Amidons. It was a very special and well-deserved tribute to Dean and Fran, full of wonderful memories. According to Fran, it was "simply astounding" to have everyone together.

Happy birthday wishes to **Kay Pratt** on June 13, to **Kyle Wing** and **Nancy Kalodner** on July 1, to **Walter Parks** on July 7, to **Jerry Raab** on July 14, to **Harold Greene** and **Jessica Thorn** on July 15, to **Leonard Weber** on July 18, to **Joseph Kopetchny** and **Lena Green** on July 21, to **Richard Sheridan** and **Oona Sellew** on July 23, to **Thomas Lipsky** on July 24, and to **Charles McTavish**, July 28.

Happy anniversary wishes to **Dean** and **Fran Amidon** on June 18 and to **Tim** and **Grace Burke** on July 1.

News items or birthday greetings you would like to share? Please submit them to me, just Route 23, or give me a call at 528-4519. Contributions are most appreciated! Thanks in advance.

— Stephanie Grotz

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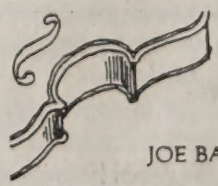

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MONTEREY GRANGE

The Monterey Grange No. 291 met June 7 for the election of officers. All officers were re-elected. Plans were discussed for future pie and food sales.

Recently the Grange furnished part of the program for the ninetieth anniversary at West Stockbridge. Six members took part. The Grange will furnish cookies for the Red Cross Coffee at Veterans' Hospital in Northampton July 2. Cookies are to be at Lecturer's house June 30.

A special awards night was held at the Monterey Grange in an open meeting on June 21. Special deputy Fred Bardwell from Whately was guest speaker, and presented the Monterey Grangers of the Year Award to Robert and Violet Hardisty. Assisting in the ceremony were Richard and Patty Hardisty (son and daughter-in-law) and grandchildren Heather and Richard. Also receiving an award, the past Master's Jewel and Lecturer's Pin, was Lecturer Mary Wallace, who has held the post for forty-five years. Assisting in presentations were State Treasurer Alicia Brazie, Deputy Peter Martin, and past State Flora Vivian Shaw, from Granby, Connecticut. Guests were present from Mellenville and East Chatham, New York, including Deputy Charles Morse, as well as other guests from Huntington, Whately, West Stockbridge, and Umpachene. Five non-members were also present. There was a short memorial for our late Brother Julian Work.

A variety program and a bountiful buffet were enjoyed by all, also a special cake made by Master Tillie Butler.

The Grange has been invited to Neighbors' Night at Umpachene Grange No. 269. The next meeting will be July 19, a patriotic program.

— Fraternally,
Mary Wallace, Lecturer

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JEAN CONSTANCE STOWELL

Jean Constance Stowell, 79, died May 26 as a result of an automobile accident near her home in North Carolina. She and her husband Stewart had a home on Sylvan Road from 1969 to 1985.

She is survived by her husband; three sons, Ken, John, and Jim; and six grandchildren. She was active in the Monterey Church, serving as clerk and trustee. She had had a slow-moving ovarian cancer since 1979 and was under the care of Hospice for the last six months of her life. She got dressed most every day and did light housework. Her weakened condition probably contributed to her death.

DRO E. PROUDIAN

Dro E. Proudian, 38, of Manhattan and Main Road, Monterey, died Wednesday, May 31, in New York. According to his companion, James Walden, the cause of death was complications from AIDS.

Mr. Proudian was a native of Beverly, Massachusetts, and grew up in Westbrook, Maine. He was born in 1956, the son of Paul and Olga Proudian, now of Watertown, Massachusetts, and grandson of Dro Kanayan, president of the first Armenian Republic in the 1920s.

After attending Loyola University in Montreal and the University of Southern Maine in Portland, Mr. Proudian opened an after-hours dance club in Ogunquit, Maine in 1978, served as entertainment consultant to the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, New York, and then completed management training at the Sheraton Royal Biscayne Hotel in Key Biscayne, Florida.

He was director of sales and marketing for the luxury Grand Bay Hotel in Coconut Grove, Florida, from 1983 until 1987. Until illness forced his resignation in 1992, he was director of American operations for Petrossian, the French specialty foods company.

In addition to Mr. Walden and his parents, Dro Proudian is survived by two brothers, John, of Nahant, and Paul, of Grey, Maine; and a sister, Nina Hovsepian of Westford.

CALENDAR

Sunday, July 2 Tea in Main House at Gould Farm, 4 p.m. All are welcome.

Sundays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 AA meetings, 9 a.m. in the Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

Thursdays, July 6 and 20 Meeting of the Monterey Parks Commission, 7:30 p.m. in the Town Offices.

Friday, July 14 Full moon owl prowl, 9–10:30 p.m. at The Bidwell House, Art School Road. Free admission. Call 528-6888 for information.

Fridays, July 14 and 21 Nature walk for children led by Bonner McAllester, 9–10:30 a.m., from Church basement. Register, 528-9385.

Saturday, July 15 Public meeting with the Select Board for second home owners, 10 a.m. in the Town Offices

Tuesday, July 18 Free blood pressure clinic, 9–10:30 a.m. in the basement room of the Monterey Grange.

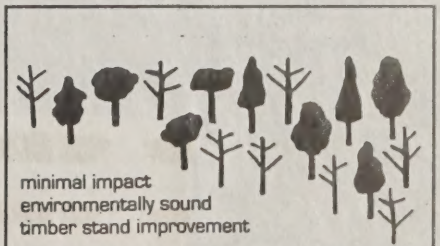
Wednesday, July 19 Meeting of the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste District, 7 p.m. in the Church basement.

Saturday, July 22

Outdoor Folk Concert featuring "The Old Grey Goose, 2–4 p.m. at The Bidwell House, Art School Road. Adults $8, children $3, members, $5/$2. Information, 528-6888.

Square and contradance, 8:30–11:30 p.m., Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Joe Baker. All dances taught, beginners and children welcome. Refreshments. Adults $5, children $2. Information: 413-528-9385 or 518-329-7578.

Saturday, July 29 Garden tour, a walk and talk discussing the development of the historical landscape, 2-3 p.m. at The Bidwell House, Art School Road. Information, 528-6888.



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We invite readers to submit letters, news items, opinions, stories, poetry, drawings, and photographs. Please send submissions by the fifteenth of the month before publication, addressed to the attention of the Editor.

Send any change of address, or initial request to receive the *News* by mail to Susan LePrevost, Business Manager.

Address your request for advertising rates and information to the Editor. For further information, telephone the Editor at 413-528-3454 evenings, or 528-9937 days.

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Contributions from local artists this month: Maureen Banner, pp. 21, 31, 34; Brandy Brooks, p. 11; Christopher Carnese, p. 26; Bonner McAllester, pp. 32, 33; Pete Murkett, p. 28.

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